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First Issue of the New**

# **COACH AND BUS**

The PSV Industry's News Weekly

## **WEEK**

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# COACH AND BUS WEEK

The PSV Industry's News Weekly

ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 22 1992



## Stuart Johnson: facing life without a franchise

LAUNCH  
ISSUE

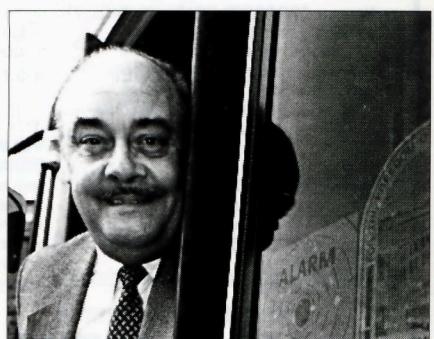


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# COACH AND BUS

The PSV Industry's News Weekly

## WEEK

Welcome to Coach and Bus Week: the first weekly news magazine dedicated to the entire PSV industry. It's your industry and we will aim to bring the news to you as it happens. We will also look behind the stories of the week to keep you right up to date with this ever changing market.

Before 1986 there was a clear distinction between bus and coach operations and the people who ran them. But deregulation blurred the lines. More coach operators moved into local bus operations, tendered and commercial. Bus operators have increasingly looked to expand the scope and size of their product range - primarily through acquisition.

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**Coach and Bus Week brings together the unrivalled coverage of both Bus Business and Coachmart, magazines that have built reputations on accurate, unbiased reporting of news and features behind the news.**

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Inevitably this has meant the information needs of both coach and bus operators have changed in line with the market itself. And, with the imminent dismantling of trade barriers within Europe, they look set to change still further. *Coach and Bus Week* has been launched to meet the information needs of coach and bus operators today and tomorrow.

*Coach and Bus Week* brings together the unrivalled coverage of both *Bus Business* and *Coachmart*, magazines that have built reputations on accurate, unbiased reporting of news and features behind the news.

But *Coach and Bus Week* will go further - the industry's leading writers will complement our specific coach and bus news stories with pan-PSV analysis and comment. We will attempt to draw conclusions about some of the major issues facing today's operators.

And we will have a strong voice, both within our industry and probably more importantly to the relevant bodies that influence the future of this industry. You can rely on us to campaign for your interests.

In short *Coach and Bus Week* will give you more, it will give it to you better, and you'll get it every week.

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COACH AND BUS WEEK ENDING 22 FEBRUARY 1992

**The dust settled this week** on the flurry of deals which marked the end of National Welsh. Julian Peddle's Rhondda Bus consortium now owns Porth depot, having sold on Aberdare and Merthyr to Cynon Valley Transport. Rhondda Bus also bought Caerphilly depot from KPMG Peat Marwick. No buyer was found for Bridgend depot and it has been shut. Negotiations over the future of Barry are still continuing.

**Cambus has taken over** its biggest competitor in the Cambridge area. Millers Coaches of Foxton ran 39 vehicles and employed 60 people on tours and tendered and commercial bus services.

**Public transport minister**, Roger Freeman, seems to be back peddling on London deregulation. He told a recent meeting of London borough councillors: "If I can be convinced we are taking a step backwards rather than forwards with deregulation, then I will think again."

**After much delay** and speculation, Plaxton has finally relaunched the stylish 425 integral it bought from Duple three years ago. It will be built in France by Plaxton's Lorraine subsidiary, but will still be Cummins powered.

**Proudmutual**, owner of competitor Kentish Bus, has bought out the London Transport services of troubled Maidstone Boro'line. Price paid was £300,000. The remainder of the municipal-owned company was still in doubt when *Coach & Bus Week* went to press.

## ■ BUS

# Freeman offers rethink on London deregulation

With a general election likely in only seven weeks, public transport minister, Roger Freeman, has taken another step back from a total commitment to deregulation of London's buses.

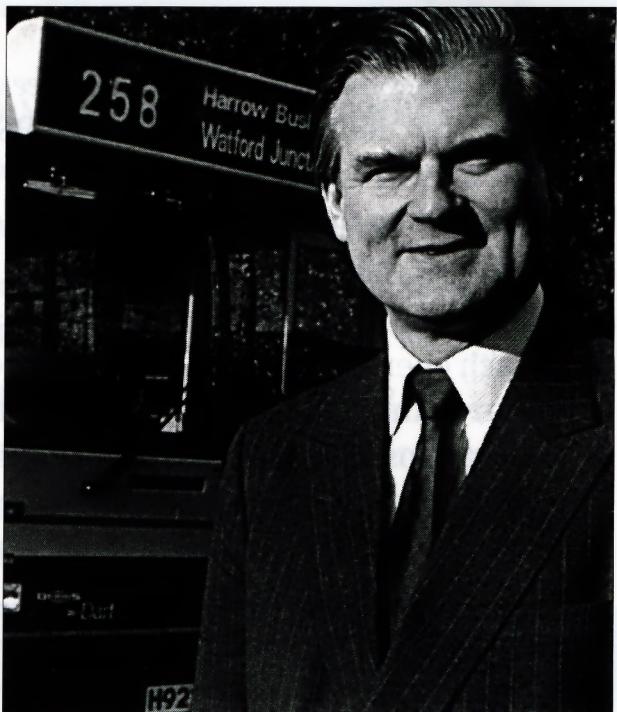
Last week he admitted to a meeting of London borough councillors that the Government could still be made to rethink its deregulation policy, only a fortnight after saying special rules may be needed to govern bus operation in a deregulated London.

Freeman told the bus priority seminar: 'Many people are concerned about traffic congestion and the effect of deregulation. There will be no deregulation until 1994 and no privatisation until 1995. We hope deregulation will mean more buses and bus passengers and fewer people travelling by Underground or car.'

"But if I can be convinced we are taking a step backwards rather than forwards with deregulation, then I will think again."

His comments were tempered by the reaction of a senior London Buses manager, who said: "You must remember that he's a politician and to a certain extent his comments are coloured by his audience. We are still convinced that deregulation will go ahead as promised if the Conservatives win the election."

However, Freeman's apparent indecision over deregulation is likely to be capitalised upon by shadow transport secretary, John Prescott, who has been trying to allay the fears of municipal managers towards Labour's planned franchise network.



**Freeman:** "There will be no deregulation until 1994 and no privatisation until 1995."

He told a delegation from the Association of Local Bus Managers, led by Bournemouth Transport md, Ted Reid, that a future Labour government would not obstruct privatisation of municipal companies, offering the reassurance that municipal employees could remain in local authority superannuation schemes.

Rules enabling municipal operators to borrow money on the open market would be relaxed, and they would also be able to diversify into other areas of business.

Franchises are likely to be offered on a five-year basis and would be renewed if the operator performed to satisfaction.

Reid said he was anxious to organise similar meetings between ALBUM and the transport spokesmen of other parties before the election.

"We wholeheartedly support the efforts and progress of the Bus and Coach Council with

politicians, but at the same time there are areas of specific concern to managers of municipal companies which need to be aired."

At a fringe meeting held by Centro at the Labour Local Government Conference in Blackpool, Prescott said the party's transport policy was one of "intervention, integration and planning."

He questioned whether park and ride was the best use of land and said he was not keen on guided bus, but he was prepared to look at all measures to promote buses along Buses Mean Business lines. He also criticised the Office of Fair Trading for preventing some cross-ticketing agreements.

On franchising he said: "I want to keep the idea of bus operators providing the service people want, even single services on a sub-contracted basis. We must get flexibility into the system, but you can have grandfather rights to ensure stability."

CBW

## COACH & BUS WEEK EVENTS:

**Smart Card '92:** March 3-5 1992 Olympia 2.  
**Bus '92:** March 17-19 1992 IMechE HQ London

**The Future for Public Transport in the West Midlands:** March 27 1992 Birmingham Polytechnic

**23rd Annual Public Transport Symposium:** April 7-9 1992 University of Newcastle upon Tyne

**Blackpool Rally:** April 11-12 1992

**British Coach Rally:** April 25-26 Brighton

**UITP Conference Public Transport: Security and Environment** May 11-13 1992 Paris

**Accessible Transport '92:** 25-26 June 1992 Twickenham Conference Centre

## ■ BUS AND COACH

# Cambus buys out Millers Coaches

Cambus Holdings has bought Millers Coaches, its largest competitor in the Cambridge area. The deal follows the retirement of proprietor Bernard Miller and involves 39 buses and coaches and 60 employees working on a mix of coach tours and contracts, tendered and commercial bus services.

Pending the appointment of a permanent manager, Cambus traffic manager, Chris Simes, is in day to day control at Millers' depot at Foxton, six miles south of Cambridge. The Millers Coaches and Millerbus trading names are being kept and the business will remain as a separate trading unit within the Cambus Holdings group, alongside Cambus, Viscount Bus & Coach and Premier Travel Services.

Cambus Holdings group managing director, Paul Merryweather, says the acquisition is part of its plan to expand its business in Mid-Anglia: "We have not looked to expand outside our territory and I did not want someone else to buy

the business."

The Millers coach operations include holiday work for tour companies, an area in which Premier also operates: "It is a very good core of coach operations and is something I wouldn't want to lose. On the face of it, it looks quite profitable."

Until last autumn, Cambus and Millers were competing on several routes, including Saturday park and ride services in Cambridge. The remaining duplication, where buses run within a few minutes of each other, will be eliminated, but Mr Merryweather says there are no immediate plans to transfer routes between the two companies: "It is fair to say that Millers has some contracts for subsidised services, operated on a lower cost base, which it doesn't make any sense for us to transfer to Cambus."

Millers' older, mainly high floor vehicles will be replaced by newer Cambus vehicles and the park and ride services will be upgraded to be operated by Leyland



**Cambus in Cambridge: buying Millers has removed a major competitor**

National 2s and a pair of Leyland Lynx acquired from Millers.

Mr Merryweather is reluctant to say if Millers will be used as a vehicle to win low cost tenders, but concedes that Cambus is losing tendered work to operators prepared to bid low: "We've got some fairly keen tender prices and, like most people, we've got separate rotas for competitive tender work. But the trouble at present is that because coach operators have lost

money on their traditional work, they are tendering for bus work at ludicrously cheap rates.

"They are winning most of the tenders, but they will end up costing them money when they discover the real cost of running bus services."

Mr Merryweather says the recent court cases in South Yorkshire Transport's favour make an MMC referral unlikely: "I think the South Yorkshire ruling has encouraged us in making

a deal like this," he told Coach & Bus Week.

## CAMBUS HOLDINGS

Cambus Holdings was formed by the management of Cambus and paid £1.5million to buy the company from the National Bus Company in December 1986. Cambus was split in two in 1989, with Viscount taking over the northern area based around Peterborough. Most of Premier's operations were bought from the AJS Group in 1990.

## ■ BUS

## Shearings deal completed

The second stage of the Timeline Travel formation was completed last week with the acquisition of the Shifnal-based operations from Shearings by its former transport director, Ian Longworth.

It follows the transfer of north west operations

last month and the opening of a new depot at Lowton near Wigan.

The Shifnal base was extensively modified after the purchase of Archway Motors by Shearings in 1989, and controls Shropshire operations as well as competitive commercial services in

Telford operated against Drawlane subsidiary Red North.

The operations are substantially different in the West Midlands Traffic area, from those in the north west. In addition to the depot, 21 buses and coaches and two taxis have been acquired.

Vehicles acquired include single and double deckers as well as F-reg Leyland Tigers, the first for the Timeline fleet.

Thirty drivers and manager Gerald Cooper will all stay with the new company.

Managing director, Ian Longworth said that the operations would remain unchanged: 'In this part of the world we provide

every service to the community from school buses and excursions to local routes and even a market day town service in Newport.'

Longworth emphasised that the purchasing had not yet been completed. 'There is a third stage still to come and that will include the travel office at Bolton bus station,' he said.

**CBW**

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**■ BUS**

# Watson back on the buses

Outspoken East Midland managing director George Watson was back in the bus industry last week – less than seven days after being forced to resign from management in the Stagecoach group.

Watson has taken over as operations director at independent Sheffield Omnibus after buying out the 25 per cent stake held by original founder Bob Thompson. Watson resigned from his position at East Midland on the

morning after the Bus and Coach Council dinner after being told that his management style was “not appropriate for the future direction of the company.”

Informed sources suggest that Watson’s flamboyant style of management flew in the face of the group’s structured management approach although Mr Watson was unwilling to discuss any reasons for his resignation: “I don’t

want to go over the past. Let’s just say that East Midland has been brought out of the red into being the second most profitable company (in the Stagecoach group) since I’ve been here.”

He joined Stagecoach in 1989 after three successful years as general manager of Clydeside Scottish and a spell as traffic manager with Western Scottish. Stagecoach seconded him to help set up the Docklands Transit project with Harry Blundred before appointing him to East Midland.

During his spell at Chesterfield-based East Midland, Mr Watson bypassed the union and started negotiating individual contracts. He also faced a number of unfair dismissal actions as key union men were dismissed.

He also slimmed down the middle management structure, with depot traffic superintendents



**Back behind the wheel:** George Watson is now operations director at Sheffield Omnibus.

reporting directly to him. Fellow director Peter Jenner was declared supernumerary as Mr Watson reduced the working directors of the company to one.

His replacement as managing director Robert Harvey (see Coach and Bus Week Moves) said there would be a staff reorganization after a new operations director was appointed for the company.

Mr Watson moved swiftly to secure Bob Thompson’s £250 worth of shares in Basichour Ltd, the parent company of

Sheffield Omnibus. Thompson was one of the four original founders, but had found it hard living away from his family.

Led by managing director, Ian Dyson, Omnibus has grown to 36 vehicles in 12 months with all the directors managing hands on. “I’m pleased to be joining a young, progressive organisation,” said Mr Watson. “This is a good job in a real competitive climate.”

## Harvey new MD

Robert Harvey has taken over as managing director of East Midland following the sudden departure of George Watson.

Mr. Harvey, 47, joins the Chesterfield based company from fellow Stagecoach subsidiary, Bluebird Northern of Aberdeen, where he was finance director for the last three years. He joined

the bus industry in 1975 as accountant at Western SMT of Kilmarnock and moved 18 months later to MacBraynes haulage of Glasgow as company secretary and deputy general manager.

Mr. Harvey was appointed finance manager of SBG Engineering of Edinburgh in 1983, before moving to Northern in 1988.

**■ BUS**

## Sheffield Council step into street saga

Sheffield City Council has stepped into the long running battle to limit the number of buses in the city’s congested central shopping streets.

It has applied to the North Eastern Traffic Commissioner to place a traffic regulation condition on buses using the High Street/Church Street and Haymarket/Waingate

routes on grounds of excessive traffic congestion and road safety. The council wants use of these streets to be restricted to buses making genuine cross-city journeys and for services terminating in the city to be diverted to the new Pond Street interchange on the edge of the shopping centre.

The move follows

months of unsuccessful attempts to achieve a voluntary reduction in bus numbers.

South Yorkshire Transport announced an apparent agreement last November for all operators’ services to be reduced by 15 per cent. Since then, several operators – including Sheffield Omnibus and Yorkshire Terrier – say

they have made these reductions, but they question whether SYT has cut its services. Yorkshire Terrier managing director, Bill Baldwin, says SYT is operating duplicate services on some routes.

South Yorkshire PTE is trying to introduce a voluntary code of practice governing use of the busiest city streets, with a ban on excessive waiting times and unnecessary empty bus movements, but has still to secure agreement. Baldwin says he is reluctant to lose the opportunity of future

expansion and says the PTE’s proposals lack teeth.

Most operators want the council to take the initiative and Roger Donnison, head of the city’s transportation policy unit, says: “The operators can argue about the conditions, but my view is that they would welcome some sort of external policy. They would prefer something they all have to meet, including new entrants to the market, rather than look to what co-signatories to a voluntary agreement may do.” **CBW**

■ Thames Transit subsidiary has bought four more used Volvo B10Ms to meet increased demand on its Oxford tube London express service. The four take the Thames Transit high-line coach fleet strength to 16 vehicles. Managing director, Janet Blundred, describes business as thriving: "The Ikarus coaches have proved so popular that more and more people are switching to the Tube. Numbers are up 40 per cent year on year."

■ City of Oxford Motor Services has introduced a new coach service linking Oxford, Woodstock, Shipston-on-Stour and Stratford-upon-Avon. The new X49 and X50 services offer Monday to Saturday running with three journeys a day in each direction. X50 was won from Burman Travel of Tamworth under tender from Oxfordshire County Council.

■ Stevenson's of Uttoxeter is to buy four Leyland Swifts with bodywork as an adapted version of Wright's Handybus design. To cope with the higher floor and mid-engined layout of the Swifts, as opposed to the rear-engined Dennis Dart, for which the body was designed, the Alusuisse construction has been altered.

■ The Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority has approved, in principle, multi-million pound developments of bus station facilities in central Liverpool. Proposals envisage the building of new terminal facilities at the Roe Street/Hood Street gyratory, together with a comprehensive redevelopment of adjoining Queens Square, and the replacement of the present Central Bus Station with a new facility.

■ Metro Transad has been awarded the contract for advertising on the 1,000-strong Merseybus fleet. The Merseybus win boosts Metro Transad's share of the overall UK transport advertising sheetage to 12 per cent. The company's portfolio already includes the exclusive contract for all transport advertising on Ulsterbus and Citibus in Northern Ireland.

## ■ BUS

# Low floor buses for LT

Britain's first low floor city buses could be running before the end of the year, if Department of Transport and London Transport plans are implemented.

Andrew Braddock, head of LT's unit for disabled passengers, plans to lease a demonstration fleet of low floor buses to an operator for one route in the capital and Anne Frye, head of the DTp's disability unit, has funds available in 1992/93 for a demonstration outside London. They are co-operating in drawing up a specification for buses which will combine UK Diptac features with a low floor and wheelchair access.

British suppliers will be invited to build the buses, but they are more likely to be imported. Dutch builders Den Oudsten and Berkhof already build suitable vehicles, as do Mercedes-

Benz, MAN, Setra, Neoplan and Scania.

The DTp is about to invite bids from local authorities and operators to run between 10 and 12 buses on a single route in an urban area. It will monitor the success of the service, to determine the effect on running times, congestion, boarding times and patronage so longer-term policies can then be drawn up for accessible buses.

The DTp will fund the extra cost of the trial batch of low floor buses, compared with conventional rear-engined city buses like the Optare Delta. Ms Frye expects this will work out at around £25,000 per bus, taking account of converting Continental designs to right-hand-drive and fitting DiPTAC features like textured handrails which are not used in Europe.

Wheelchair access will either be by horizontal bridging or a kneeling device. "We would not need either if we could get the bus to the kerbside every time," says Ms Frye. "We want to minimise the number of high-tech bits that can go wrong and some of the German and Dutch features are too fancy for the British scene."

She wants an early start to the DTp-supported scheme. "I want it to be up and running as soon as possible. It may be optimistic, but we hope to have the buses running by the summer." Any local authority outside London is welcome to participate, but she expects it is most likely to appeal to one the metropolitan PTEs.

"The obvious drawback just now is finding someone prepared to buy 10 or 12 buses," she says.

## ■ BUS

### AVE planning bus imports

Low-floor buses may be imported to Britain from Holland by Q-Drive subsidiary AVE Berkhof.

New models planned this year include DAF-based vehicles and, subject to chassis availability, the Volvo B10R midi.

Two other new products, which AVE already has firm orders for, are the first 10-metre Dennis Javelin and a 57-seat 3.7-metre high Excellence 2000HL with a ramped floor on a Volvo B10M chassis, which is destined for Cantabria Holidays.

Firm orders for Berkhof coaches have come from Tellings Golden Miller of Byfleet, Halcyon of Hull and Thomas Coaches of Rhondda.

AVE Berkhof sales director, David Waterman, said: "The market is going to be tough again in 1992 but, with a broad range of quality products and a good customer base, I am confident that we'll do as well as we did last year."

## ■ BUS

# Dennis wins £6million MoD order

Dennis Specialist Vehicles has won a £6million order to supply the Ministry of Defence with 137 Javelin coach chassis for delivery by the end of next year.

The chassis will be a mixture of lengths - mainly 10 metre and 12 metre but some 8.5 metre - and will include both right and left-hand-drive

models. All will have Cummins C-series engines and ZF S6-90 gearboxes.

Bodywork will be by Wadham Stringer, the main contractor, and the contract was won through competitive tender.

Roger Heard, Dennis SV sales director, said: "We are delighted to be supplying our Javelins to meet MoD requirements.



Dennis Javelin: 137 for delivery to MoD by next year

This order, worth almost £6million, is one of the biggest in the company's history.

"The various Javelin models have a high degree of component commonality which is important in any fleet operation and particularly so in military use."

Dennis parent Trinity Holdings reports a record

order book for its buses, coaches and refuse vehicles, and is taking on more staff in spite of the recession in its core markets. Group companies Dennis Eagle, Dennis Specialist Vehicles and Duple (Metsec) have received orders over the last four months worth more than £50million. **CBW**



## ■ COACH

# Plaxton relaunches 425 integral coach

Plaxton is relaunching the integral 425 coach design bought three years ago from Duple. But it is still Cummins powered.

Plaxton is building 12 at its Carrosserie Lorraine plant in France to test UK demand and will sell them through its Kirkby Coach & Bus dealership in Anston.

Prices have yet to be fixed, but expect them to be close to those for semi-integral Scanias with

Plaxton Premiere bodies.

One major marketing change is a reduction in seating capacity. When it was launched by Duple, the 425 was available to 63 fixed seats, but the first Lorraine-built models will have 53 Plaxton-built seats and centre mounted toilet. Plaxton marketing manager, Kevin Wood, says this reflects changing practice: "Major fleet customers we're quoting for next year are talking

about less than 53 seats. Wallace Arnold wants 50 and we are getting vibes that other companies are thinking of less than the maximum too."

The 425 forms part of Plaxton's long-term export strategy, but there is no immediate plan to build left hand drive models.

The basic specification is unchanged since the 425's launch in 1984/85: Cummins L10-290 engine and integral construction

using Cromweld 3CR12 stainless steel. Kerb weight is still around 11.3 tonnes and luggage capacity is 13 cu metres. But it now has more Plaxton standard parts and significant detailed changes overcome weaknesses in the Duple product.

The seven speed ZF gearbox has been replaced by the eight speed 8S190 model and, instead of the cable shift used before, it has a more precise swing link change similar to that on the Dennis Javelin.

Type Approval, which has delayed the resumption of production, demanded more powerful brakes which now include a Telma 191 retarder as standard and Category 1 ABS as well as improved noise insulation in the engine bay and an upgraded silencer.

Ventilation has been improved and the front wiper linkage has been changed to Plaxton's standard, creating space for a more powerful demister and more legroom around the clutch pedal.

■ Both versions of the new DAF DB250/Optare Spectra double decker are available with Voith automatic transmission options. Operators can choose a four-speed D854.2 on the Intercity bus, and the D851.2 three-speeder on the Citybus.

■ A major UITP conference is to be held in Paris on violence and vandalism on buses.

Forty specialist speakers and experts will discuss the issues at the conference which runs from May 11-13. The seminars will be complemented by an exhibition of the latest technology in graffiti management and anti-mugging devices.

Registration is by contacting the UITP on fax: 010 32 2 660 1072.

■ London United has been forced to run minibuses, instead of deckers on several routes - thanks to weight limits on Hammersmith Bridge. The minibuses will run on routes 9 Mortlake-Liverpool Street, 283 East Acton-Hammersmith, and the night bus N93. Frequency will increase at times, but the N93 will be diverted to use Putney Bridge.

■ Two new bus services for Strawberry Vale and Hanworth, will start on May 9. Both services were won, on tender, by London United.

Route R70 Richmond-Hampton Nurserylands is to be extended to Hanworth, while R68 Hampton Court Station-Richmond will change to take in Strawberry Vale and extended to link Kew Gardens and Hampton Court.

■ A Black Country Development Grant has enabled West Midlands Special Needs Transport to buy three mobility dial-a-ride minibuses. The £75,000 investment in 10-seater Mercedes 408D conversions, will serve 70,000 handicapped people in Walsall and Sandwell.

■ Unrestricted parking in the eastern Highway and Wapping areas is to be curtailed by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, according to the Metropolitan Police.

CBW

## ■ BUS

# Four capital boroughs get £1.2m for priorities

Four London Boroughs have been allocated £500,000 for bus priority measures as part of the 1992/3 Transport Policies and Programme submissions, and further resources are being held for possible allocation when firm proposals from south and west London and Tower Hamlets have been submitted.

The allocation of £200,000 for Newham, and £100,000 each for Haringey, Camden and Ealing, has been warmly welcomed by London

operators. Last month public transport minister, Roger Freeman, announced the allocation of £3million funding for 21 authorities outside London.

Freeman said: 'The £500,000 we have allocated today will enable four London boroughs to introduce a number of measures to help speed up the progress of buses. Further resources will be allocated next year for other schemes.'

"This is the first time

the department has asked London boroughs to submit specific bus priority measures for funding and I have been delighted by the response. The boroughs are giving serious consideration to role of the problems of our urban environment.'

The allocation should fund bus lanes in Acton and Ealing, and a TRANSYT system of junction priorities.

Haringey Borough is now set to install a northbound bus lane in Wood Green High Road, one of

the busiest bus routes in the country, and a southbound lane further down Green Lanes. Peak flows of up to 79 buses per hour in the High Road - 74 on Saturdays - and 45 per hour along Green Lanes are common.

Haringey's allocation fell £25,000 short of its bid. Newham Borough intends to install bus lanes along the A124 Barking Road/A11 Leytonstone High Road/A118 Romford Road, although its allocation was also £26,000 short. In Camden, new bus lanes will be introduced along the Hampstead Road/Chalk Farm/Highgate Road and Fortress Road.

# SCANIA N113 The Cleaner Quieter Bus



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■ BUS

# Nat Welsh sell-off sparks free-for-all...

Competition has increased massively in National Welsh's operating area after receivers sold off most of its depots.

A number of operators have moved services into the area sparking off a free-for-all.

National Welsh's Porth, Aberdare and Merthyr depots have been bought by Julian Peddle's consortium for £750,000.

The consortium which is backed by Midland Fox managing director, David Martin, and PMT parent company Butler Woodhouse, now trades as Rhondda Bus.

Former National Welsh's management and staff are also involved in the new company.

The Aberdare and Merthyr depots were sold

on rapidly to an off-the-shelf company Offademo, owned by Cynon Valley Transport managing director, George Shaw, and three councillor directors from the municipal, who immediately closed the Aberdare depot.

Rhondda Bus has subsequently bought the Caerphilly depot from the receivers, KPMG Peat Marwick, adding 18 drivers and 12 vehicles to the 89 vehicles and 180 staff based at Porth.

Peddle said: "We looked at National Welsh's Porth operation and decided it had an excellent revenue base and a good workforce. We have set aside 15 per cent of the shares for the employees and Bob Gilbert, Roy Godfrey and John Sweeting will be

moving to Porth from the old National Welsh head office.

"We urgently need to spend money on the properties and the fleet. Buying new vehicles will be a high priority. The staff are glad that the uncertainty is over and that the company has new owners who they have actually seen."

Attempts by KPMG Peat Marwick to find buyers for National Welsh's Bridgend depot have failed and it has been shut. However negotiations over the future of the remaining base, Barry, which is still open, were going on as *Coach and Bus Week* went to press.

Many former National Welsh staff have secured employment with other operators which have



rushed in to fill the gaps.

Mark Thomas' Western Travel, which this time last year bought National Welsh's eastern operations, has moved about 40 vehicles into the area.

Twenty seven minis are operating in Merthyr, where they are competing against Offademo as the Valley Bus Company. The remaining vehicles are based at Pengam in the Rhymney Valley and run big bus services to Caerphilly and Newport in one direction and Cardiff in the other.

Other operators which have thrown their hats into the south Wales ring include Badgerline subsidiary South Wales Transport, which is now running in Bridgend, and Cardiff City Transport

continues to run its newly registered services in Caerphilly.

However, Jones Motors, Bebbs Travel and Red & White have retreated from the Rhondda following the appearance of Rhondda Bus.

The competition in Merthyr is particularly intense, with over 100 departures an hour from the bus station, but Western Travel chairman, Mark Thomas, said he was pleased with the progress made by his operation so far.

"We are very happy with our Merthyr operation which Red & White started at very short notice. Passenger numbers and revenue levels are in line with our expectations for this competitive phase."

■ BUS

# ...as Cardiff Bus moves in

The collapse of National Welsh has hastened the first fleet order for Plaxton's aluminium-framed Verde bus body.

As part of a 50-vehicle expansion to replace National Welsh in Caerphilly and the Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff Bus has bought 14 of the 15 Verde-bodied Scania N113CRB 51-seat single deckers built for stock last year. They replace Metrorider midibuses on routes in south Cardiff, freeing them up to help

provide the 20 new services from February 24.

The council-owned company is spending around £1.4million on the fleet expansion. It has acquired used Renault S56s from Plymouth Citybus and has hired similar buses from West Midlands Travel.

Additional staff, some former National Welsh employees, are being recruited for the new services and are being retrained by Cardiff Bus.

Managing director,

Frank Yates, says the Verdes are better suited to the south Cardiff services: "We found the midis did generate some additional passengers after we deployed them some years ago, but they're quite busy routes and we took the view that single deckers are probably better. The routes in the Vale of Glamorgan and Caerphilly are natural midibus services." He says the company was impressed by the Verde when it placed a single

deck order last year, but that order went to the Leyland Lynx instead: "Given that the Lynx is no longer available, we had to re-examine the type of single decker we wanted. We already liked what we had seen of the Verde and these vehicles were available.

"We would have bought single deckers in any event in 1992/93, so we have brought this order forward to deploy them to best effect on our main network. And that gives us the wherewithal

to address our new service registrations."

Cardiff already operates seven Scania buses and coaches and has also ordered three Alexander-bodied Scania N113DRB double deckers for April delivery. For the first six months, they will operate a special shuttle service between Cardiff and the National Garden Festival at Ebbw Vale, after which they will be used for normal fleet replacement.

CBW

## ■ BUS

# Labour and TGWU draw up workers charter

Labour and the Transport and General Workers Union has launched the London Busworkers' Charter - a four point pledge to all busworkers in the capital.

If elected, Labour has pledged to:

- Scrap all plans to deregulate London.
- Place all bus services under the control of an elected Greater London Authority.
- Replace route tendering with network franchising, with London divided into six to ten areas.

- Negotiate wages and conditions centrally to apply to all franchise areas and to every company within those areas, with one set of rates and conditions for OPO drivers, crew drivers, conductors, midi drivers and each grade of engineering support staff.

The charter aims to increase quality and reliability of services, restore the status of the industry and employee, raise training and maintenance standards, improve vehicle design

and civilise industrial relations. The Charter also says midibuses will be used only to increase mobility and not cut wages, but there will be scope for the payment of locally negotiated bonuses in certain conditions.

- The Womens' Passenger Charter is due to be launched next week. It has been drawn up to highlight the ways in which transport systems fail to meet the needs of women and the improvements women are calling for.

## ■ BUS

# MRN bus blaze: arson suspected

Police suspect arson as the cause of a £3 million blaze which destroyed or badly damaged 24 vehicles belonging to Midland Red North's Stafford operation.

But just two weeks after the fire the company is moving to a new site in the town.

Arson is suspected, as the fire started in the early hours of Sunday morning at the beginning of the month, when the town centre depot was closed and locked up.

A total of 24 vehicles were either completely lost or severely damaged, with a further number suffering extensive smoke damage.

Nevertheless a full service was maintained

on the Monday with vehicles drafted in from other depots in the company.

Additional buses have now been loaned to the company from sister companies in the Drawlane Group, as well as Grimsby Cleethorpes Transport and Trent Buses.

A new base at BRC in the Queensville area of the town has been partially used since the fire and will become a formal base until structural damage to the garage is rectified.

MRN commercial manager, Chris Chattoe, said 18 minibuses, two midibuses and four single deckers were badly damaged.

## ■ BUS

# No jobs for smokers at Quickstep

Non-smoking drivers, key to new Quickstep Travel's high service standards, are on the road running three new routes from west Leeds to the City centre.

Competing with Yorkshire Rider, Nigel Jolliffe's new smoke-free company selected just nine drivers and one fitter out of 150 applicants.

The operation, set up with partner Philip Dance is based in Hunslet and operates eight second-hand, but extensively refurbished, Leyland Nationals Half-hourly daytime frequencies are

maintained from Monday to Saturday. The drivers are the image builders of Quickstep Travel. We've got ultra-clean buses and give helpful and courteous service to all our passengers but that could all be spoilt by a driver smoking," said Mr Jolliffe.

The company claims in its publicity that its buses are cleaned 'properly' every night and that single deckers are easily accessible to everyone. After one week of operation, Mr Jolliffe said the company had bedded-in well.

CBW



Kentish Bus route 51 goes to London Central.

The latest round of London Transport route tenders have been won by private sector operators Thamesway and Transcity.

London Northern and London Central, both London Buses subsidiaries, have each

won and lost routes.

Routes 214 (Parliament Hill Fields - London Bridge) and W7 (Finsbury Park - Muswell Hill) came into the tendering system for the first time. W7 stays with London Northern and 214

Managing director, Peter Hobcraft, said the company would buy eight new Dennis Darts, taking his fleet size up to 48, and recruit about 20 drivers when the route started this autumn.

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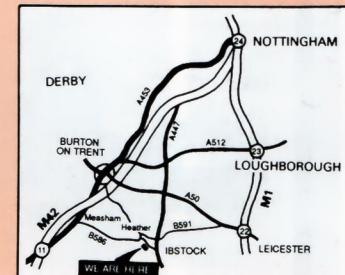


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or lease from £104 per week

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or lease from £43 per week

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**G RENAULT MASTER**, diesel, Hi roof, Crystal Conversion, under floor luggage, excellent condition throughout ..... £12,995 or lease at £82 per week

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## ■ COVER STORY

# "A fighter who will come back"

**STUART JOHNSON MAY BE DOWN, BUT HE IS CERTAINLY NOT OUT. HE WILL BE BACK, HE TELLS IAN GRIFFIN.**

The recent changes at Stuart Johnson Ltd have caused much speculation within the industry but Stuart Johnson himself is at pains to stress that he is "pleased that he has been able to retain an association with the company that he previously owned."

Others are not so sure and on one hand question Scania's decision to remove him from the central role whilst also doubting his apparent whole-hearted agreement with Scania's decision.

Founded in February 1983, Stuart Johnson Ltd became Scania's main dealer in September 1986 following approaches from both DAF and Scania. Johnson chose the Scania route out of a belief "that chassis manufacturers are set to become more powerful than body builders" and that "a solus deal was vital". Expansion quickly followed with turnover increasing from £350,000 in 1983 to £20 million in 1990.

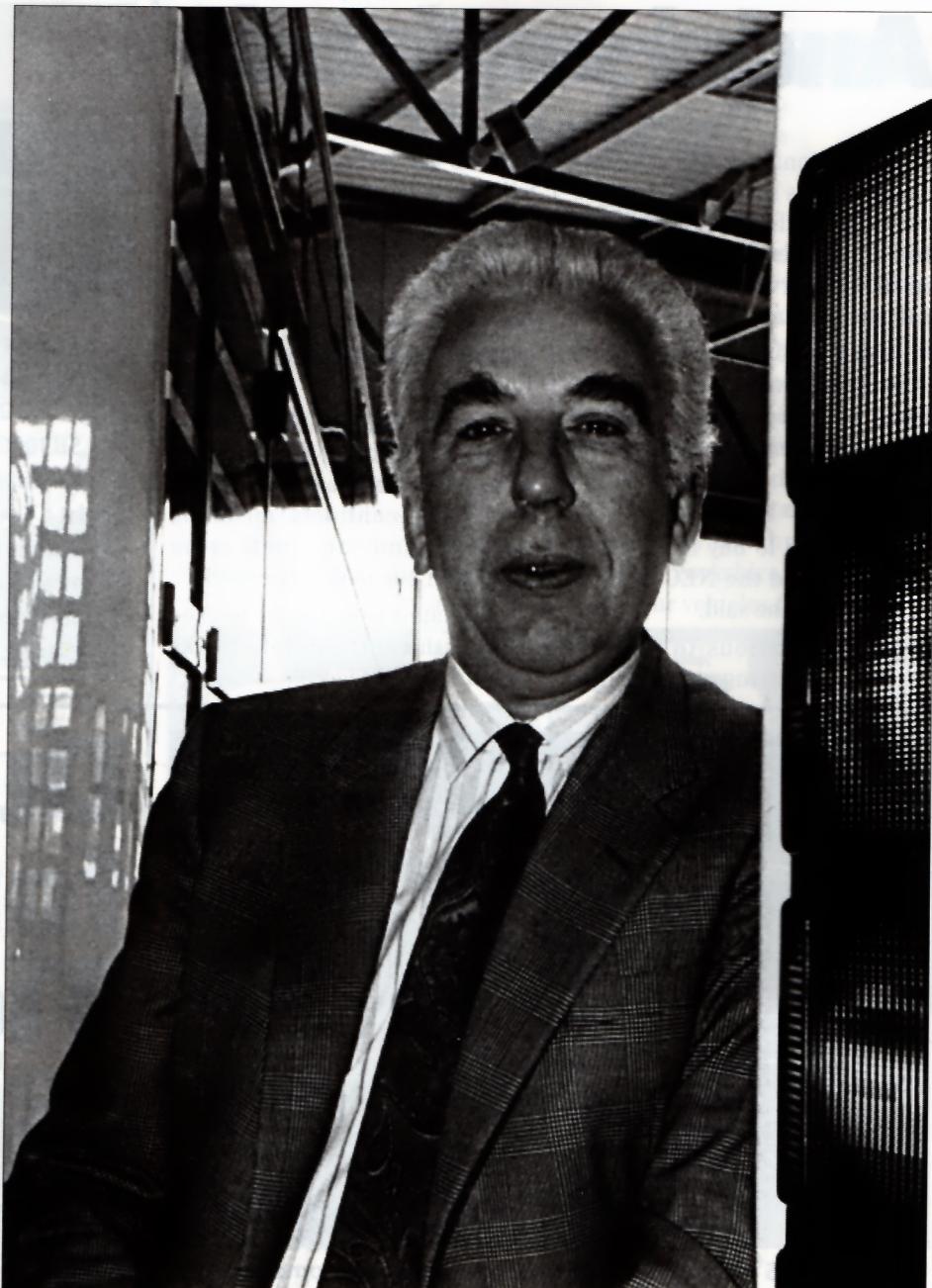
However, the expansion was not without problems. The initial growth after the appointment as main dealer by Scania necessitated a move away from Harthill and in March 1988 Stuart Johnson acquired a greenfield site in Worksop. Building was quickly commenced and the purpose-built premises opened in January 1989. Thus the

significant additional costs coincided almost exactly with the start of the worst depression ever seen by dealers in the British Bus and Coach Industry.

By September 1989 it became clear that a financial restructuring must take place if further progress was to be made and hence Johnson approached Scania which agreed to inject finance into Stuart Johnson Ltd in March 1990.

In doing so Scania had established a dealer foothold in the UK to ensure the continuing presence of their quality products and Stuart Johnson had ensured that despite the recession the future was healthier.

With the new finance in place Stuart Johnson Ltd continued on its policy of reducing stock levels to an acceptable level. At the same time it continued to nurture a client base that now included: Busways; Yorkshire Traction; Yorkshire Rider; Cardiff, Brighton & Hove, Shearings and Applebys. But continuing high finance costs relating to both new and used stock prevented the company from true 'recovery' and early this year Scania agreed to acquire the remaining stock in Stuart Johnson Ltd held by Johnson and his wife Kathryn. Whilst Scania now controls the major dealership for which it



**At the age of 54, after 34 years in the coach and bus industry, Stuart Johnson looks set to start again.**

must have craved Johnson is not so fortunate - he is left with a consultancy agreement with Scania which must restrict his activity although he states that without Scania's involvement his position would now be worse. So where to now?

For Scania, it's business as usual. Don MacIntosh is now running Stuart Johnson Ltd and rumour has it this will shortly be renamed and will provide the new and used coach outlet for Scania in the UK with the exception of Scotland. Bus Sales will be handled directly by Scania (Great Britain) from its Milton Keynes headquarters, a

move which Johnson says reflects Scania's view that "there's not part-exchange on bus and therefore the manufacturer can handle it direct and take the margin." Johnson accepts the quality of the Scania product will ensure their continued strong presence in the UK market.

Johnson himself is faced with several options. He accepts that "it's a very difficult industry to fund and therefore suits the big players." With this in mind he will make the most of his consultancy agreement with Scania and additionally look to market non-competitive product. Certainly he will do so with the support of

MacIntosh who describes him as "a fighter who will come back and I wish him the best of luck." It's a feeling that is mutually shared. But having known him for some time it is hard to imagine this proving sufficient challenge in the long term and a move to join a major organisation within the bus and coach industry must be a distinct possibility. Failing that, if Scania drop the Stuart Johnson name who would bet against him resurrecting it. He's only 54 and there must be a number of manufacturers who would value the 34 years experience he can boast.

CBW

## Anderson's trio

Ex-professional footballer, Mark Anderson has scored a hat-trick... with the birth of his first child and the delivery of two new DAF SB3000 Algarve 1 coaches from Salvador Caetano.

Mark, a former player with Tranmere Rovers, was delighted when wife Sarah gave birth to daughter Emma..... and equally delighted with the arrival of the new additions to his fleet.

'I decided to buy the coaches when I visited the NEC show at Birmingham,' he said.

'It was obvious to me that when the existing stock of new

coaches has been sold, operators will be facing much higher prices for new vehicles.'

Mark started his coaching operation, based at Tower Bridge, in 1988, and considers he was in the right place at the right time.

He now runs six Algarves and two other vehicles - the oldest an E-reg. His current work consists of a mix of contracts, incoming tourists and an increasing amount of business house work.

His latest vehicles are to exec spec with centre toilet, drinks machine and fridge.



**Proud new arrivals are, top: the DAF SB3000 Algarves, and right: Young Emma with mum and dad, Mark and Sarah.**



One of the 15 new Optare MetroRiders which Welcome Services is running in Tyne and Wear.

## Warm Welcome for MetroRiders

Fifteen new generation Optare MetroRiders are spearheading Welcome Passenger Services of Gateshead's new Tyne and Wear local service operation.

The buses have been bought for use on commercial routes 120 and 400, a figure-of-eight two direction circuit linking the Newcastle suburbs of Walker and Chapel House.

Each vehicle is manufactured to the popular fastflow specification, which with its wide entrance door, allows simultaneous boarding and alighting, reducing time at bus

stops and increasing profitability.

DiPTAC features are fitted to ensure passenger safety and help the elderly and disabled in the 29-seater buses, which have standee capacity of 13.

The exterior livery is in a striking yellow, red and blue.

According to Chris Wallace, Welcome's chairman: "The MetroRider is a busman's bus, designed specifically for the job it has to do. Reliability and economy have been highly evident from the beginning of their operation."

## Dunn opts for Leyland Tiger



**Above: One of the last Leyland Tigers to be registered, purchased by Bob Dunn, right, for Dunnline Travel.**

Dunnline Travel, the Cinderhill, Nottingham-based operation, has expanded its fleet with the purchase of one of the last Leyland Tigers to be registered. The vehicle, bought from Yeates, the Volvo-owned dealership, comes with appropriate DLT registration.

It has Plaxton Paramount 3200 bodywork, fitted with 53 reclining seats, soft trim and radio/PA/cassette.

The Cummins-powered

vehicle was supplied in white, ready for application of Dunnline signwriting and logo.

Bob Dunn, who took over the former Netherfield coach business in 1984, is a firm believer in buying a vehicle to do the work - and fitting the driver to do the job.

His philosophy extends to deciding the type of vehicle he wants but, beyond that he says: "It's down to the deal you get."

## Javelin on target for Tates



An 'offer they couldn't refuse' has led brothers Alan and Stan Tate to the purchase of their first Dennis Javelin.

The Markyate, Hertfordshire, operation has been running for 45 years, and Tates new vehicle joins a fleet of eight vehicles which cover the full range of work from continental tours to school contracts.

**Above:** The new Dennis Javelin – Tates' first.

The company has a long-standing 'buy new' policy and recent purchases have included Bova and other DAF-powered coaches.

The new Javelin/Algarve 1 is fitted with 53 reclining seats and is to full touring spec.

## Classique buses for 'Tracky'

The financial collapse of the CG Whittaker group, of which bodybuilder Europa was a part, has meant that Yorkshire Traction has had to wait a while for the delivery of its new vehicles.

But the company has now taken four 33-seat buses from the members of the Europa team who set up Autobus Classique. These Classique-completed vehicles were, at the time of the Whittaker collapse, contracted by a number

of finance houses.

Said Tracky's chairman and managing director, Frank Carter: "Since our own privatisation five years ago, we have bought a lot of buses from local manufacturers, such as Optare of Leeds, and Reeve Burgess of Chesterfield, as well as Europa. I am delighted that the Europa team is now back in action as Autobus Classique and that Yorkshire Traction has taken four vehicles from them."



## New Volvos for Burnley & Pendle



With more than 30 Volvos already in its fleet, Burnley & Pendle has opted for two new 10-metre B10Ms with 45 seats, plus 20 standing, with East Lancs EL 2000 single-deck bodywork.

The two new vehicles are fitted with many DiPTAC features, including split-level entrance, shark-toothed nosing, palm-operated bell pushes, and side and rear route number blinds.

"We were looking for something to replace two

of our short Leyland Leopards," explained Burnley & Pendle's engineering director, Ian Lord.

"After looking at various demonstrators, including the Optare Vecta and Dennis Dart, we decided to stick with the B10M, because this is the model we have standardised on."

With over 30 Volvos in our fleet, there didn't seem much point in changing when the B10M can be adapted to suit all our big bus needs."

## Stevensons buying Handybus Swifts

Stevensons of Uttoxeter is buying four Leyland Swifts with bodywork an adapted version of Wright's Handybus design.

The Alusuisse construction has been altered to cope with the higher floor and mid-engined layout of the Swifts, as opposed to the rear engined Dennis Dart for which the body was designed.

Stevensons managing director, Julian Peddle, said: "I am very impressed with Wright's quality and construction methods. We have 20 Wright bodies in service or on order, and these include the first Volvo B6R with a Handybus body."



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# Competition Helps Customer Care

I had been talking to George Watson at the Bus & Coach Council annual dinner only hours before his departure from Stagecoach subsidiary, East Midland Motor Services. I found that he cherished an old public sector belief, that you can only run bus service successfully in a monopoly situation.

He refused to admit the possibility of operators co-existing in peaceful competition. It was an engaging conversation as my philosophy on this matter is somewhat different!

It also contrasted violently with the emerging thoughts that were so well put across in an interview on Radio 4 recently by Peter Shelley, operations director of Solent Blue Line. His company was a product of deregulation and is now running a substantial fleet

in competition with Southampton Citybus. He was convinced that its secret of success had been to discover exactly what customers wanted from their local bus services, and then meet that expectation.

A few days ago I saw a graph depicting the value of sales made over the past two years by a bevy of well known high street traders. Every one of these household names had a graph line which showed a depressing and dramatic fall over the last six to nine months.

There was a single exception, the graph line for which indicated steady, encouraging, upwards progress, with barely a wiggle indicative of recession. It was that of a store with an international reputation for giving ordinary people extraordinary value for

money, who rarely have sales, and who are renowned for their staff training and care: Marks & Spencer.

**Competition is the device which makes all employees grasp that they have to be 'user friendly.'**

I have instanced just these two examples of the benefits of customer orientation, but many more abound. It is, I believe, one of the almost unnoticed phenomena of our times, that the number one success strategy is now customer appreciation and care.

Even if I did not have an ingrained distrust of monopolies, I feel that I would fast be coming round to the view that monopoly trading is impossible today in law,

in practice and in concept. For it is surely becoming more and more apparent that competition is the device which makes all employees in any business, but especially bus and coach operation, grasp that they all have to be 'user friendly' if their prospects, aspirations, and even jobs, are to have a future.

At my level of operation, I live with competition, and love it. Were I ever to have the misfortune to find myself running a major concern with a near monopoly market, my inclination would be to, quietly, encourage a measure of competition onto the scene in order to keep me and all staff on our toes at all times.

In my estimation, competition is a good bed fellow of being consumer orientated, but monopolies can create casual customer care.

## What a funny lot we are...

Aren't we a funny old industry? Our drivers expect to get free food, as well as 'commissions' for simply pulling in to the coach park of an eating establishment or taking passengers to the turnstile of a tourist attraction.

Coach operators expect hotels and other attraction providers to host them on educational visits. It's the same when we visit manufacturers.

The greatest incongruity of all is the BCC dinner. It is OUR function to which we might, according to the normal rules of decency and etiquette, have been expected to play host to any guests which we might care to invite along to share this fine event. But do we? Do we heck!

The vast majority of those attending come as guests of suppliers to the industry. As one of the few who paid for my supper, I find this decidedly odd, but, as I said, we are a funny old industry, aren't we?

## Aiming for a transport utopia

Another little snippet which I gleaned also related to maintaining the monopoly, is that the rethinking of Euro-funding of UK projects puts into doubt the planned reopening of a passenger railway line running through central Nottinghamshire.

Irrespective of the effect on the monopoly of the dominant bus operators there, this does not strike me as an unmitigated disaster as it is a probable mis-application of Euro-funds.

At a village idiot simpleton level, if this line had any potential at all to carry passengers it is from a large residential area of Hucknall into nearby Nottingham.

But the game of local authority 'oneupmanship' has also resulted in plans for a Light Rapid Transit scheme from the aforesaid Hucknall into Nottingham.

Talk about over-egging the pudding!

One wonders whether the proverbial village idiot does not, in fact, enjoy more sanity than some transport planners!

The dream of integrated transport has been denied by

the clumsy actions of politicians and transport planners.

**This dream of integrated transport has been denied to the nation by the clumsy and ill-founded actions of politicians and transport planners**

My opposition to the reopening of minor passenger lines, as one who does use British Rail quite a bit, is based on the view that Inter-City is quite good and does have a considerable, and valuable, role to play in public transport, but that the days of a station serving every village have long since passed.

What 50 years of Road Service Licensing did for this country was to create so much conflict between modes of public transport that we have never had even a remotely integrated transport infrastructure.

I am heartened to hear Virgin's Richard Branson and Brian Souter, of Stagecoach, expressing an

interest in taking over some rail operations.

If this leads us to a time when we have Inter-City trains which offer reliable connectional facilities, and through ticketing, from and to local bus and express services, we will indeed be moving towards a transport utopia.

This dream of integrated transport has been denied to the nation by the clumsy and ill-founded actions of politicians and transport planners.

Without them it might have come some years ago, and thereby avoided some of the problems of congestion and high car usage which now beset us.

I always favoured deregulation at the simple level of removing unnecessary restrictions on the uses of coaches and buses.

I earnestly believe it will also be a great bonus if it leads to a better rail system too.

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# Time is Money

**Will a 62mph speed limit devastate the economics of coach services and finally bring a third lane ban? Alan Millar has been seeking the views of leading operators.**

**I**t is the political battle the coach industry knows it cannot win. EC transport ministers have agreed a directive on fitting speed limiters to coaches and trucks in the member states, effectively setting a new maximum speed limit throughout Europe. Were the directive about almost anything else - the designation of the carrot as a fruit or the fate of Twyford Down - it would provoke an outcry, but this one will go through without a whimper. Politicians, the national press and, above all, the general public think trucks and coaches travel too fast. Our MPs will not be moved to oppose it.

But it could have a serious effect on coach operations. The directive requires all new coaches to be fitted with speed limiters set at 100km/h (62.1mph) from January 1, 1994 and for vehicles first used on or after July 1, 1988 to have them fitted by January 1995 for international journeys and January 1996 for national journeys.

As all post-1974 UK coaches already have to be fitted with speed limiters set at 70mph, logic suggests that when the directive is translated into British law, the new limits will apply to all coaches. Otherwise, older coaches will be permitted to run 8mph faster than new ones.

On the same dates, trucks must be fitted with limiters set at 85km/h (52.8mph), but a five per cent tolerance in the speed setting means they can run at up to 90km/h (56mph). There is no similar tolerance for coaches; 100km/h is absolute. And that helps explain the industry's hostility to the directive and its last ditch attempts to block it.

The industry's concern is less about the limit as of the relative difference between the speeds of coaches and other road users. If the new limit for trucks reduces the speed of traffic in the middle lanes of motorways to 56mph, but cars in the outside lane continue to travel at over 70mph, coaches could effectively be excluded from the outside lane. They will be stuck behind slower trucks, unable to pull out into faster traffic.

There even is the chance that the Government would use the speed limiter

directive to introduce a formal outside lane ban.

Shearings' tour services director, Jimmy King, suspects the new rules could lead to public pressure for a third lane ban. "If coaches are stuck in the outside lane on an incline at 62mph, will motorists complain that coaches are too slow? Now, they think they are doing 95mph when they are governed at 70mph. Or will they press for them to be banned from the outside lane?"

Scottish Citylink Coaches managing director Guido Crolla is also resigned to a third lane ban. "We would like to be able to use the outside lane, but at 62mph it could be difficult. From a practical point of view, it would increase congestion and as a car driver I know I wouldn't like coaches to pull out at 62mph." The positive side, he hopes, is that the lower speed limit will give a much-needed boost to the public's perception of coach safety.



**Speed limits: more congestion, slower journeys, higher prices**

But both Jimmy King and Wallace Arnold operations director Stephen Barber say the lower speed limit will increase the risk of accidents, by causing bunching in the middle lane.

Barber also says it could increase the cost of reaching some tour destinations at ends of long motorways and dual carriageways A-roads, as journey times will extend and relief drivers may be required. He suggests this could add to the costs of holidays in resorts like Falmouth and St Ives which already are less popular than nearer destinations like Torquay.

As well as being more expensive, longer journey times would also be unpopular. "It is turning the clock back 20 years. Tourists to Torquay then spent their first night in Bristol. I don't think they would accept that now."

Barber believes the frustration of driving behind trucks on motorways will shift coaches on to quieter A-roads like the A1 and A38. "Between us, with our interchange at South Mimms and Shearings' at Scratchwood, we run 40 coaches mostly up the M1 in convoy. You will get that moving on to the A1 instead."

Both major tour operators suspect it might lead to more powerful - and consequently more expensive - coaches being required to ensure that they maintain the maximum speed uphill as well as on the level. Shearings' most powerful coaches are 276hp Volvo B10Ms, but Wallace Arnold already has some 340hp models to maintain constant speeds. Volvo's 400hp B12R - expected in Britain as a three-axle coach - is designed to meet this same need.

Depending on when the new limits take effect, National Express need not reschedule its services before the winter 1993 timetable starts in October that year, but it suspects the main impact will be on longer motorway services where journey times go over the four-and-a-half driving duty limit and additional drivers are required at extra cost.

Guido Crolla is most concerned about the effect on Citylink's daytime Anglo-Scottish services which encounter traffic congestion. "In Scotland, there are very few times that our vehicles are travelling in excess of 62mph. We can probably live with it and we can just about handle it on overnight services to London."

He says the main difficulty for coach operators will be where drivers' hours limits are affected and Citylink may have to use additional drivers or have longer breaks at service areas. "We are currently doing surveys of passenger perceptions of stops, to see if passengers still want them," adds Crolla.



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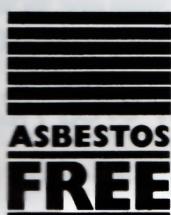
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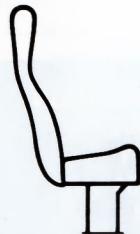
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# The High Flyer

**Acquisition of Strathay Omnibuses last summer has put Yorkshire Traction's Frank Carter firmly into the big time. How does he manage four major bus companies?**

**F**rank Carter has become an expert on air travel. He needs to, for it is the best way of getting from Barnsley to Dundee, headquarters of Strathay Omnibuses, the company his Yorkshire Traction group bought from the Scottish Bus Group last July. But he would be the last to claim that this is the jet set. Dundee's airport only shed grass for a concrete runway about two years ago and while some may take Club Class or champagne and caviar for granted, Carter leaves one in no doubt that he is thankful just to arrive.

His monthly visits to Scotland have also left him with the problem of what to do with the Scottish £1 notes he brings back to Barnsley. "They won't accept them when I try to spend them in the pub," he jokes.

But the idiosyncrasies are far outweighed by the benefits. He is happy to count the Scottish £1 notes flowing into a business which already has profitable bus companies in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire and is seriously interested in further expansion. In January, he was poring over the receivers' details of National Welsh and was looking actively at two other bus companies. "We are in a situation where we live by our competitive edge at this time. In business, you're either going up or down. You rarely stand still and we'd like to be moving up."

Carter has done a lot of moving up since he became an apprentice fitter in 1954 with East Yorkshire Motor Services, then a BET company, in his native Hull. He spent 24 years at EYMS, including a break for national service, rising progressively to become assistant chief engineer. Spells as chief engineer at Lincolnshire Road Car and Northern General led, in February 1984, to his appointment as general manager (later managing director) at Yorkshire Traction, just as it faced one of the greatest upheavals of its history.

As the only NBC company operating entirely within Section 24 of the 1968 Transport Act, it depended on PTEs for its existence. Twenty per cent of its services were in West Yorkshire, 80 per cent in South Yorkshire where fares were the lowest in



**Master of all he surveys: Yorkshire Traction, Lincolnshire Road Car, Strathay Omnibuses and the ex-Shearings Barnsley operation.**

the country. "The maximum fare in South Yorkshire was 25p and it was so cheap to travel that people would spend 10p or 15p to travel from one of the neighbouring villages into Barnsley and just walk around for the afternoon."

That all ended as Government diktat outlawed the cheap fares subsidies and

pushed South Yorkshire fares up by 250 per cent in April 1986.

Carter saw patronage fall by 30 per cent as passengers made fewer journeys, and privatisation and deregulation loomed.

He and his colleagues hammered out their buy-out plans on their way back from the famous December 1985 NBC managers' meeting in Birmingham when Nicholas Ridley had confirmed that NBC would be sold off in bits. Having taken advice, Carter urged his colleagues to support him in making a quick bid for the business and theirs was the 16th deal to go through, for £1.4 million, in January 1987.

"In hindsight, I believe it was the best decision. Prices of companies hardened as the deals went on and the Government felt it needed to get something going in the North."

What followed was sheer hard work. "You are unable to envisage the problems you will see and, remember, these were the early days of deregulation." He believes the market has yet to find its natural level and argues that the recession has only suspended competition; it will be back when retailing recovers and shoppers are back on the buses. "New entrants were coming into the market constantly and local authorities found that networks were not what they wanted and needed a lot of modification. And you don't really come to terms with tendering for school services on an annual basis until you have to do it."

As if that was not enough, Carter and fellow directors George Peach and John Myers had early ambitions to expand the business. They joined the bidding for several other NBC companies, including two in the West Country. What they got - in January 1988 - was closer to home, Lincolnshire Road Car. Their £1.6 million bid was one of nine for what was widely recognised as a long-term loss-maker. But at least Carter knew what to expect.

"We bought a balance sheet. You know what you've got in terms of assets. The problem was that the trading results were quite concerning and more concerning was the fact that in an area where results were not great and there is no large centre of population, a great many people thought

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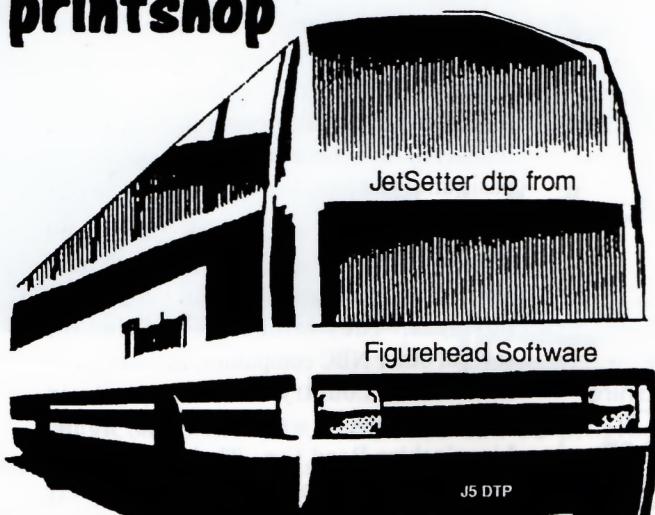
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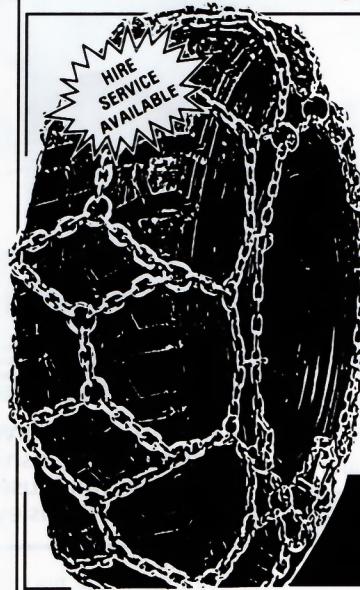
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they could compete."

The local management team headed by MD Paul Hill - the only surviving NBC MD who did not buy his company - has had to address these challenges and after two tough years has restored the business to profit and has begun investing in new buses for the first time since 1986. "We had to pull out of Boston," says Carter. "There were five operators competing in a small market town and we saw no future for Road Car there. There were more buses than passengers."

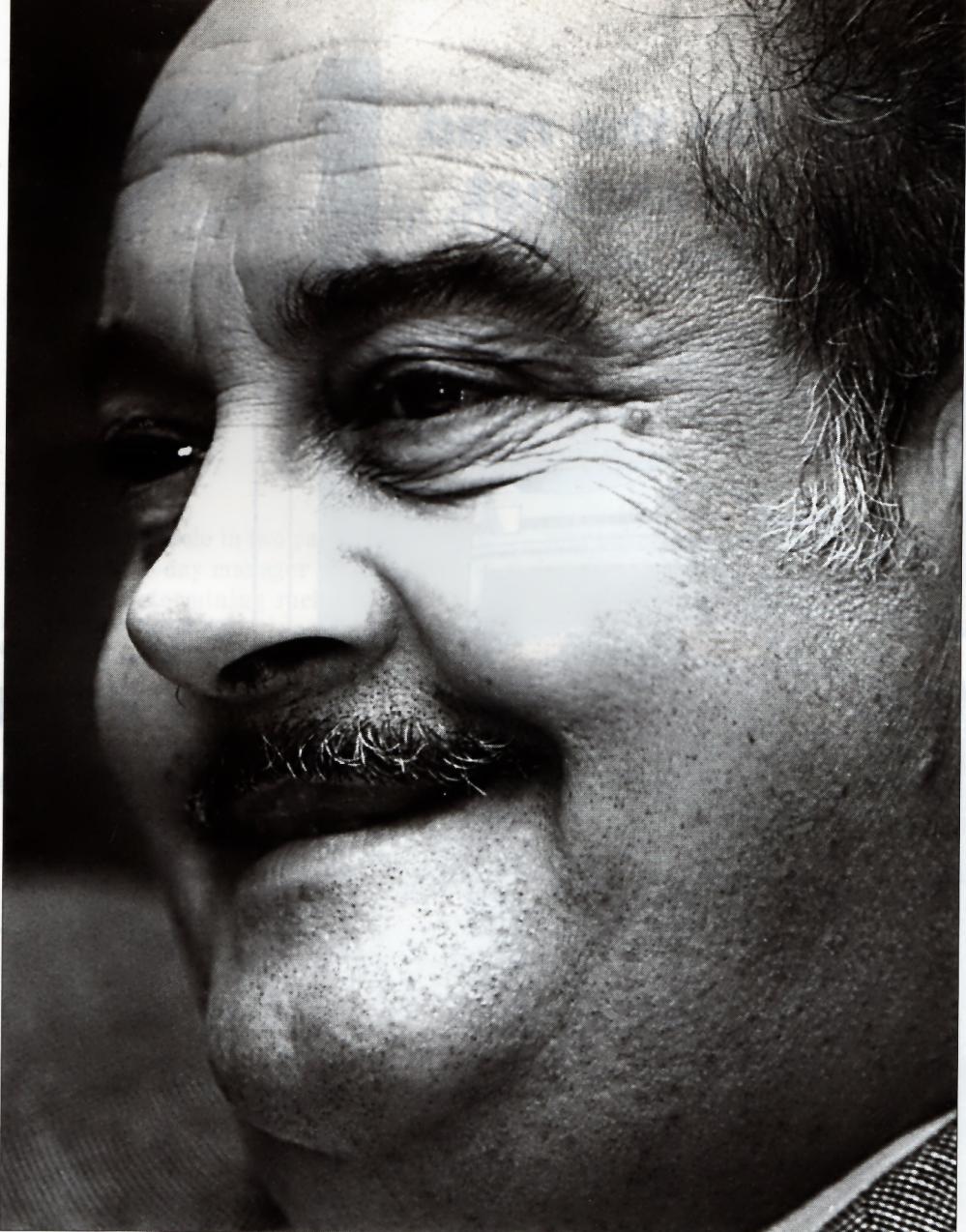
But retrenchment there contrasted with a fight back in Grimsby. Before Yorkshire Traction bought the company, it had pulled out, fearing it lacked the equipment to face a competitive onslaught from the council-owned Grimsby Cleethorpes Transport, but the new owner re-opened the depot and fought back with a fleet of secondhand Sherpa minibuses, a few of which are still running.

It has been a process of trial and error, identifying the strategy needed to restore the business's fortunes and arriving at a manageable size of fleet. From 180 vehicles at the time of the acquisition, it climbed to 260 at one point before settling back to 230 today.

Perhaps not an error, but certainly a trial, was the acquisition of Gash of Newark just three months after Road Car joined the group.

Here again, too many buses - about 50 in the two fleets - were chasing too few passengers around a small market town and Carter made a successful approach to buy Gash. The plan was to run it as an autonomous business, but within months it had fallen foul of the Traffic Commissioner for poor maintenance standards and the business was merged into Road Car.

For an engineer like Carter, this was especially embarrassing. "I don't think we ever regretted the acquisition, but it was a very difficult time for us. We pride ourselves in sticking to the rules and having a good relationship with the Department of Transport. I wouldn't have wished to be seen doing otherwise. I felt the episode was messy and I was pleased to get away from



**Carter on SBG sell-off: "I am very surprised at some of the prices paid. Some of those companies, certainly as stand alone companies, could be very fragile if interest rates go up."**

it." He puts it down to not having appreciated the problems quickly enough.

"Gash had a very old fleet which made the Road Car fleet look modern and they were in something of an unsatisfactory condition. There was a general manager there, but he relied fairly heavily on Mrs Mutrie, the chairman and daughter of the Gash family who lived in Kent and only paid two-weekly visits to Newark."

By 1990, the core business in Barnsley was up against some effective low cost competition and Carter was seriously considering setting up a low cost subsidiary to combat it. Instead, he bought one of the competitors, the local bus wing of Tom Jowitt Travel, retained Jowitt's services, leased an operating base at nearby Wombwell and relaunched it as Barnsley & District.

Last autumn, that business was put on a firmer footing when Rank sold Shearings' bus operations in Barnsley. Not only did Barnsley & District get the services, but to Carter's surprise the property became available too and he transferred the land

and premises to Barnsley & District. An agency agreement to maintain Shearings' coaches in the area runs until August 1993.

Before Shearings' operations were acquired, Carter was already making his regular flights to Dundee, having become the only English operator to buy a Scottish Bus Group subsidiary. Strathtay was, in fact, only one of several SBG companies for which Yorkshire Traction bid and Carter's office still has a cabinet well stocked with information on the others.

He reckons he may have succeeded with his £2.5 million bid because other potential bidders were after bigger prizes. "We bid on companies we felt we could make something of and some people may not have bid if they thought it would foul up their strategy of buying one of the bigger companies."

He got Strathtay, which competes with newly privatised Tayside in Dundee and with Stagecoach around Perth, for a fraction on prices paid for some of the other SBG companies, something he puts down in part to the protracted disposal programme and

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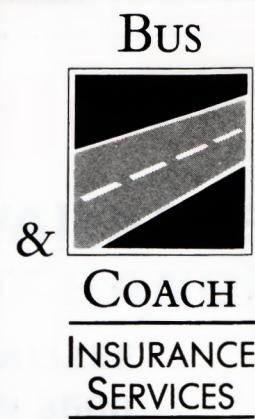
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## **"Our policy is to dispose of hulks and not major units. I don't see why we should make a ready-made tool available to a competitor."**

the onset of the recession. Some of the higher prices amaze him.

"I am still very surprised at some of the prices paid. I really begin to wonder how those companies can service their debt. Their turnover is unlikely to rise by more than inflation in years ahead, they have very little chance of expansion and a better chance that the three per cent decline in public transport will continue. Yet they are paying around half of their turnover for the initial purchase price. I feel those companies, certainly as stand-alone companies, could be very fragile if interest rates go up."

But he insists his interest in Strathtay is strictly long term and is happy to squash a Scottish-based rumour that there is a secret agreement with Stagecoach to swap Strathtay for East Midland Motor Services after a decent interval and give each group a company nearer its centre of operations. "We're not in the marketplace to bid for other people and I don't think that Brian Souter would want to swap East Midland, anyway. It's fair to say, also, that I was into the last tranche of bids for another company which was of no interest to Brian Souter."

Distance, he adds, is no object to running a successful group of companies. He professes complete faith in managing/finance director Charlie Mullen and the others in the team he inherited at Strathtay, all of whom had to adjust to the initial disappointment of being beaten in their bid to buy the company.

The Yorkshire Traction style is to agree corporate plans, budgets, cash flows and out-turns annually with subsidiaries, then to leave the companies to achieve those objectives. "There is no point in having an MD at Strathtay if I'm going to be the MD," says Carter. "They have no need to come to me for decision. If you are going to put a group together, I see no other way of running it."

"I shall be in Lincoln tomorrow, but that's because I go most Tuesdays. I may only spend an hour with them and almost certainly my meeting with Paul Hill won't be structured. And I may call at two Yorkshire Traction depots on my way back."

He sees his role in two parts. He is the senior day-to-day manager at Yorkshire Traction, determining such policies as rigorous customer care training programmes, and, as chairman, he lays down group policy. "I am the person there to

"Our policy is to dispose of hulks and not major units. I don't see why we should put a ready made tool available to a competitor at a price less than we have to depreciate the replacement vehicle. If you do that, you either put yourself into a disadvantageous



Famous last words: "We will look at anything if we feel it has a future for us"

bounce ideas off, if they wish to, and the person to pull it all together and see that we have a common philosophy in business. I see myself as a motivator for the group."

A large chunk of group profit is being ploughed into fleet renewal. "We only need to please ourselves and I believe there is no great requirement at the company to pull massive sums out of the business," says Carter. "It allows you to give good investment policies and it means if you hit hard times and have to cut back, you can live off the fat for a while."

Companies can borrow vehicles from one another and use the Barnsley central works for major repair work. Carter says there also is a substantial benefit in reduced stock holdings of major units. And this is enhanced by the group's policy of never selling complete surplus buses either to other operators or to scrap dealers.

position or you put your competitor into an advantageous position.

"And it makes a lot of sense salvaging major units now when vehicle purchasing is very low and manufacturers are bound to have to pass a good deal more of their overhead costs on to spare parts production."

So what does the future look like for Carter and his burgeoning bus group? He is constantly on the lookout for other business opportunities to capitalise on. And not just bus companies. Commercial confidentiality stops him revealing details of a new unrelated venture the group has just got into, but he does admit to a few which nearly made it into the group. He looked seriously at a carpet warehouse, two haulage companies and retail outlets. "We will look at anything if we feel it has a future for us," he says.

# Maintaining Standards

**Is it better to buy new and rely on manufacturers' back-up or spend less on older vehicles which need more constant attention? Alan Millar finds out the experiences of operators which do both.**

**I**t is one of the most critical decisions in the coach and bus business. Do you commit your capital and future earnings to expensive new vehicles or do you buy older vehicles, accept they may break down, and spend more on preventive maintenance and spare vehicles?

There is no universal answer. You do what you feel is best for the work you do and manage your fleet to get the best out of it.

The Kings Ferry proprietor Peter O'Neill, running 60 coaches on Kent-London commuter services and a busy private hire programme, operates mainly new vehicles. His oldest single-deckers are three years old, double-deckers up to seven years old. The fleet is a mix of Volvo, DAF/Bova, Mercedes-Benz, Scania and Dennis, all selected with as much of an eye to the way they will be maintained as to whether they can do the job.

Those considerations are weighing heavily on his mind as he decides whether to buy Scania or Dennis coaches this year.

He wants to be certain the manufacturer's local dealer understands The Kings Ferry's needs and that it can fit in with the service back-up his own staff provide. Three of his 17 engineers work from 6pm to 1.30am on routine maintenance; two others, an auto electrician and a diesel engineer, take service vans to London every day to rectify minor faults like defective light bulbs while the commuter coaches are parked for the day.

"At night, when they are doing re-lines and replacing clutches, they often need major parts and we want to be able to get them." He expects 24-hour service from dealers' parts departments and, for regularly replaced parts, like brake shoes, clutches, alternators and some valves and brackets, the company pushes manufacturers to put an imprest stock into its stores.

"As we use those parts, we inform them and they replace them and invoice us. They also check our stock monthly to make sure it's what we say it is and sometimes they will come to us for a part if they need one at night," says Mr O'Neill.

Those requirements help explain why he prefers to buy coaches from major truck manufacturers and with as little complication as possible. The back-up on his first Dennis Javelins is as much on trial as the coaches themselves.

Warranty cover is important, but Mr O'Neill tries to have it on his own terms. "We want to do the majority of the work ourselves, and in exchange for not charging us for labour, we want an exchange part. Some manufacturers are only prepared to do that if they do the work." That can mean lost earnings as dealers cannot turn the vehicle round so quickly.

Volvo only charges for replacement parts if it finds they were not faulty, but others invoice first and credit later. "With Mercedes, we found it was taking three months to go through the system. For a rogue vehicle, you could get a £2,000 invoice in March, be chased for payment at the end of April and then wait until May or June to get a credit. That affects cash flow." He has persuaded Mercedes to relax this policy for his fleet.

With such a large, intensively used fleet, The Kings Ferry can predict when some parts need to be replaced. Commuter work wears out clutches and Mr O'Neill likes to have some sort of tell-tale, a viewing hole, so clutch wear can be checked without stripping it down. "On our DAFs, there is no

way of measuring it till it starts slipping and that is 20 miles before it fails. If you strip it down, Sod's law is that it won't be worn."

In the West Midlands, expansion of local bus work has prompted Patterson's Coaches of Selly Oak to expand its maintenance back-up. It started running additional contracts for Centro (West Midlands PTE) on December 4 and soon found its daytime servicing arrangements - ideal for its coaches - were inadequate.

Until then, it had three Mercedes midibuses, one of them kept as a spare, but partner Dave Patterson says he could not justify more spare vehicles when the services were increased. Now, he employs night and Sunday shifts of mechanics to check each bus nightly, to carry out a weekly grease inspection and a major service every third week. Drivers' defect reports are essential too.

The Mercedes are covered by three-year driveline warranties and any warranty work is handled by the local dealer.

Mr Patterson has invested in workshop equipment, including column lifts and a rolling road, to assist with inspections and he believes in carrying comprehensive spares stocks. "We hold brake and clutch parts and hold everything for every vehicle in the fleet. I feel it is far better for us to hold them ourselves because a lot of things happen at 6pm when we may not be able to



Hector Boon (far right) believes his drivers play a vital role in managing his fleet of high specification coaches.



Peter O'Neill: his oldest coach is three years old and he runs 60 vehicles.

get the parts." His stocks include two reconditioned ZF gearboxes, so a defective unit can be replaced.

Mr Patterson also operates 16 Leyland Cub welfare buses on local authority contracts. Distances are short, but stop/start operation causes clutch and brake wear.

Those buses also have tail-lifts and, here again, the company prefers to replace complete units rather than try and repair on the vehicle. Dave Patterson bought 24 lifts from the Carlyle receiver last year, in anticipation of winning a tender which ended up going to someone else. He has sold some since, but intends to keep others as spares.

Hector Boon of Boon's Coaches at Boreham, near Chelmsford, believes his drivers play a vital role in managing his fleet of five high specification coaches and five Atlantean double-deck school buses.

They are expected to report defects, all of which are rectified in-house, but they also have a maintenance responsibility when they report for work. "No vehicle is started up here in the morning until the oil and water has been checked, even if the vehicle has not been out the previous day, they must look at it. In my view, it is a crime not to do that."

"And the biggest crime of all is to run out of fuel. The driver is responsible for oil, water and fuel. I don't care if the vehicle

has only gone out on an eight-mile round trip to Chelmsford, it should always be topped up on its return. That way if we do run out of fuel, the buses can still run."

He believes that is the main reason why his 15-year-old Atlanteans are still in good condition. He keeps one as a spare and three of the others only do 40 miles a day; the fifth does a bingo contract which takes it up to 100 miles. They are inspected weekly, but he relies on the drivers for defect reports. "They know I get very cross if I get in a vehicle and find something is not right."

Richard Holladay admits he probably over-maintains his nine-vehicle fleet. But Red Bus Services, based at Clyst Honiton near Exeter, relies almost exclusively on secondhand service buses for tendered routes and he believes his system guards against lost mileage and major failures.

He runs three Bristol VRTs, three Alexander-bodied Seddon Pennine 7s, a Duple-bodied Leopard coach for private hires, a 34-year-old Albion Nimbus midibus and a new Mercedes midibus bought for a five-year contract which demanded a bus under seven years old. The fleet covers about 280,000km on local services.

Holladay has adapted a National Bus time-based maintenance programme to meet his needs. Three-weekly safety checks cover brakes, steering, transmission as well as lights and seats, but on every alternate

inspection they are also given a 100-item minor service. Eighteen-weekly major services involve oil and filter changes.

Six of the buses have Gardner engines and parts are available from a local agent. Parts for VRs are available from Volvo and from a Plymouth-based specialist. Most Seddon parts, including clutches and brake linings which tend to fail most often, come from local parts factors.

In his experience, the trick of running older buses is to buy wisely - avoiding those likely to have worked over heavily salted roads - and to sell them when they start to wear out. He sold some ex-NBC Bristol LHs, bought for between £1,500 and £2,200, once their bodies became damaged and their gearboxes and back axles began to wear out. "We could have spent £5,000 or £6,000 refurbishing them, but we had the best years out of vehicles which had far exceeded their design lives."

The Seddons replaced Bristol REs whose aluminium bodies had begun to shake apart and suffer from perished window rubbers. By contrast, chassis corrosion is more likely to dictate when the VRs are sold.

"We will have to continue with used vehicles," he says, "because they offer value for money, but I do worry about where we're going to get them in four of five years' time. We might have to consider rebodying them."

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# Commissioner waits for magistrates ruling

A disciplinary inquiry has been adjourned against Gordon's Coaches of Rowley Regis until pending prosecutions are heard against them.

West Midland traffic commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh, adjourning an inquiry for a month, said he would have to wait until magistrates had heard a case against Mary and Christopher Millership.

The Millerships have been summonsed over tachograph and licensing offences, plus the use of unlicensed drivers.

Mr Pugh said he had been considering taking action against the Millership's licence following an unsatisfactory maintenance report from the Department of Transport's Vehicle Inspectorate, together with an application by the partners to increase the licence authorisation from four to six vehicles.

But Mr Pugh said he could not make a decision until after the magistrates hearing and he was not prepared to grant any additional vehicles at the present time.

told the Birmingham public inquiry that the partnership had been formed for commercial reasons.

The two transport managers nominated were Gordon Millership and Celia Hadley. The firm had been in business for five years and owned six vehicles.

Conceding there was a schedule of vehicles prohibition notices, Mr Carless said that since

**"Serious brake defects were found on all the firm's coaches during a fleet check in October"**

Christmas, however, the Millerships had had letters from the Vehicle Inspectorate, saying it was pleased the firm had taken advice given.

He said there was now a system of six weekly inspections, a flow chart and nil daily defect reporting by drivers.

had a mechanic in whom they had confidence and the vehicles were now road tested by Mr Millership.

A particular problem in the past, said Mr Carless, had concerned two mechanics who had let them down.

During a fleet check last March, vehicle examiners had found neglect. It transpired the records were not being kept as they should have been and that inspections were not being carried out properly.

The mechanic employed at that time was dismissed. But a new mechanic did not keep the inspection records properly either. He was subsequently dismissed for a number of reasons, including deception over a driving licence.

Serious brake defects were found on all the firm's coaches during a fleet check in October, said Mr Carless. It seemed someone had deliberately introduced oil into the brake drums.

Sabotage was suggested as it was the same wheel on each coach, and in one case the system was an air system. Other defects found were only of an advisory nature.

The Millerships also ran a lorry business and employed a mechanic and two assistants. They had got their act together between March and October and, but for the introduction of oil into the braking systems of the vehicles, there would have been a satisfactory report.

Asked by Mr Pugh whether there was anything else he ought to be told, Mr Carless said there were summonses due to be heard before Oldbury magistrates against Mary and Christopher Millerships for various tachograph and licensing offences, plus the use of unlicensed drivers.

**YOUR WEEKLY REPORT ON LAW AND THE COACH AND BUS OPERATOR BY MICHAEL JEWELL**

Adjourning the hearing for a month, Mr Pugh suggested that between now and the next hearing, the partners should put each and every vehicle through an MoT test and that they give serious consideration to reducing the period between inspections from six weeks.

**"The partners should put each and every vehicle through an MoT test"**

The system of maintenance that the Millerships had put into effect would only work satisfactorily if the vehicles were in A1 condition to start with, he said.

If, when the hearing was resumed, the news from the magistrates court was not too damning, all the vehicles had passed an MoT test, and there were no further prohibition notices, he could be persuaded to look favourably on the increased vehicle authorisation.

LICENSING  
and LEGAL

## John Mervyn Pugh issues suspension threat for Price Travel

The six-vehicle licence held by David Price, trading as Price Travel of Wolverhampton, came close to suspension, traffic commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh, told a public inquiry.

Mr Mervyn Pugh had considered suspending the licence until the vehicles had each passed a further MoT test.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said that the maintenance system Mr Price had been advised to take on depended on the vehicles being in A1 condition to begin with. If

they were not, it was likely that they would attract prohibition notices.

He had been considering suspending the licence in the meantime, but had decided against it as he was confident Mr Price would quickly get his vehicles through.

He said he would like Mr Price to attend a New Operator's seminar, adding: 'The whole object is to keep you in business. I take no pleasure in putting people out of business. If I can keep you operating, I will.'

LICENSING  
and LEGAL



# Four fined at Hendersons

**C**rewe based Hendersons Coaches have been fined for drivers' hours and tachograph offences on international journeys.

The infringements cost Beverley and Gerald Henderson and two of their drivers £1,560 in fines and costs at Crew Magistrates Court.

The Hendersons were each fined £380, and ordered to pay £100 prosecution costs, after pleading guilty to one offence of failing to produce a tachograph chart.

The drivers Peter Bramhall and Kevin Jones, each pleaded guilty to two offences of taking insufficient daily rest. They were each fined £240 and ordered to

pay £60 towards the cost of the prosecution.

Prosecuting for the Department of Transport, Gordon Cowans, said the offences were revealed by an analysis of the tachograph charts on double manned journey of some 735 miles in June.

When he asked for the chart for the second driver, Mr Henderson had said he could not find it or recall the driver's name.

Mr Bramhall and Mr Jones had been the drivers on two journeys in June; one between Nemes and Hull, and the other between Lugano and Crewe. On each occasion both men had failed to take eight hours rest in a 30-hour period.

When interviewed, they had said that they did not realise they

were doing wrong.

Mrs Henderson said that they still had not been able to find the missing chart. They had moved offices in June and it might have got lost.

On her CPC examination course she was told that a driver must not remove the tachograph while he was on duty, and she had instructed the drivers accordingly.

The notes said that a driver could depart from the hours limits to enable him to reach a suitable stopping place to the extent of ensuring the safety of the vehicle or of its passengers.

If the drivers were held up by roadworks or by ferry delays in the summer, they got behind. If they stopped it meant they had to take eight hours off with the passengers on the roadside, so they had to keep going to meet the third driver who took over in Lugano.

She now understood from the traffic examiner that the chart should be endorsed on the back when that happened, though she

still did not feel that it was right to remove the chart from the tachograph.

Mr Jones had joined the firm in May, said Mrs Henderson. He was a diesel fitter by trade but wanted to drive.

She had explained the regulations to him. The ferries were very busy in June and often delayed. She thought that on one of the occasions the coach had also had a puncture.

In reply to the magistrates, Mrs Henderson said that the firm had been established two years.

In a letter to the court, Mr Jones said he had wanted to gain experience in the coach industry. He had not fully understood that a 10-minute break did not count as rest.

Mr Bramhall wrote to say that they had experienced hold ups on the journeys concerned.

He was not aware that he could open the tachograph and record the hold ups on the chart.

**LICENSING  
and LEGAL**

## Harris Coaches (Summercourt) has vehicle authorisation slashed

**W**estern traffic commissioner, Air Vice Marshall Ronald Ashford, has cut the licence authorisation of Newquay-based Harris Coaches (Summercourt) from ten to six vehicles.

Censoring the company, at a Truro public inquiry, for inadequate maintenance and inspection, and a failure to keep proper records, Air Vice Marshall Ashford ordered the company to carry out four weekly inspections.

Department of Transport vehicle examiner, Brian Halling, said that until last Spring the fleet had generally been in good order.

However, by the end of the Summer there was evidence of a lack of routine maintenance.

Drivers' defect books had not, with one exception, been filled in and the inspection records were incomplete or not of the required frequency. He had some doubts about the competence of the fitters, their interest in the job and the time allowed for maintenance and repairs.

For the company, Martin



**Harris Coaches (Summercourt): licence cut from ten to six vehicles**

Evans said the fleet had been reduced from ten vehicles to six. That would have the immediate effect of reducing the pressure on those responsible for inspection and maintenance.

The company had dismissed two inexperienced fitters who had done the day-to-day work last Summer, and had engaged an experienced fitter who now supervised the workshop.

Director and transport manager, Wayne Harris, who was ultimately responsible, would, in future, assist when needed.

He stressed that when prohibition notices had been received, the defects had been dealt with immediately. He claimed that the majority of defects related to 'cosmetic matters', rather than to

substantial mechanical faults.

Air Vice Marshall Ashford pointed out that of ten prohibition notices, five were immediate ones, issued only when it was considered that a vehicle was unsafe. That represented more than 15 per cent of the vehicles examined and must be worrying for members of the public.

Mr Evans said that the lack of inspection records did not mean the inspections hadn't been carried out. Some documentation could have been lost when the company's premises were flooded last April.

He accepted this was no excuse for the lack of records after April. Some of the records had been kept, but were illegible or not filed and not available to the vehicle examiner.

Air Vice Marshall Ashford said the company had enjoyed, apart from one slight matter in 1983, a good record for many years and there was no criticism of it until 1989.

'But, over the last year, it has clearly failed', he said. 'Records were incomplete, the standard of inspection deplorable, and too many prohibition notices collected,' he added.

The company bore a heavy responsibility to the public and had slipped badly since last Summer, even though it had recognised its faults and had put in remedial measures.

'I am simply the guardian of public safety and the public has a right to know the vehicles they get on are safe and secure,' he said.

He warned that, unless the company put its house in order, its licence would be at risk. While any operator was entitled to one warning, if there was not a consistent and marked improvement, he would be failing in his duty if he allowed the operator to continue operating unsafe vehicles.

**LICENSING  
and LEGAL**

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# COACH TOURS & EXCURSIONS

## UK coaches fail to meet customer's luxury needs

11 veterans holidaying in East Anglia will be ferried around in coaches mainly brought in from Belgium.

And the reason is that the exacting needs of the US market just can't be met by UK operators, claims the boss of Tours International, Ralph Bennett.

The company, known to operators for its tour wholesaling, has just landed the ground handling for 20,000 of the former US Air Force personnel and partners for their 50th reunion celebrations.

"They need air-conditioned coaches," said Mr Bennett. "I couldn't find enough in the UK. Frankly, it's not just about the availability. It's also about price. Even if I ran empty Belgian coaches across the Channel, in many cases I could save money."

Mr Bennett warns that the European market is far more demanding than the UK, but that the British coaching public is becoming more sophisticated.

He believes that the UK public will follow suit if the highly-equipped coaches from Germany and elsewhere begin trading in Britain. He says there is a danger that many British operators will be left behind in the rush for higher standards of coach travel.

"I know European operators already looking at basing themselves in England. They are going to come over here with their quality coaches and cream off the best business," he warns.

"If you've ever sat in London in traffic, you'll know that forced-air ventilation doesn't work when you're standing still. Once you've enjoyed air-conditioning, you don't want to go back."

"If you talked to operators five or 10 years ago, the idea of coffee machines and a toilet in the coach, the answer was 'What do I want that for?'

"Now, a high percentage have them because the consumer demands them."

Mr Bennett says the same demands are being placed on tour wholesaling. En suite facilities are now essential, not optional, he says.

"The consumer has become more demanding because media coverage of destinations and service has increased."

The short break market has grown at a phenomenal rate, says Mr Bennett, whose wholesaling has doubled in 1992 over the 'awful' 1991 season.

He says the next big market will be for Eastern Europe.

"Some countries are still not switched on to a huge influx of



**The exacting needs of US visitors can't be met by UK operators, says Ralph Bennett, boss of Kent based Tours International.**

tourists but they are getting there. The Dutch and Belgians have been out there all Summer."

## Tourism cash boost for Wales

Millions of pounds is being spent to raise the profile of Wales as a holiday destination for higher spenders.

Over the next three years the Welsh Tourist Board is spending £7.5 million on a marketing campaign to boost tourism.

This follows the Secretary of State's announcement in December that the boards budget for 1992/93 is to be increased by £2.5 million. The extra cash will enable the WTB to launch its first image building campaign for more than five years.

The initiative is aimed at attracting new, higher spending

visitors and extending the tourist season each side of the peak months of July and August.

It will highlight the accessibility of Wales, the quality and variety of the tourism industry and the Welsh welcome.

The main elements of the push will be television advertising and advertising in specialist magazines - like fishing journals - and a sheet poster campaign at key sites in the North West.

Coach operators should benefit from the initiative as the image and profile of Wales is heightened.

## It's business as usual at troubled Windsor

It's business as usual at Windsor Safari Park which has been dragged into receivership.

Fears that tours could be disrupted are groundless following assurances by Chris Barlow of receivers, Cork Gully that the Park will be open this summer.

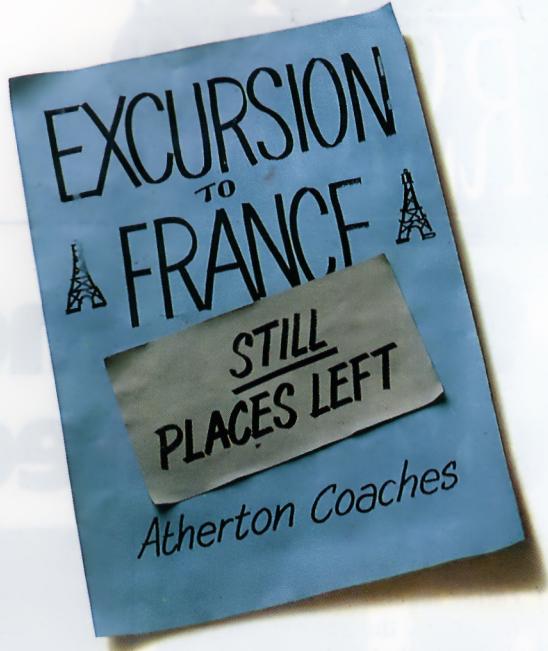
"Windsor Safari Park is a unique asset and we are in no rush to sell until the right buyer is found. Visitors can rest assured there will be no interruption in service," said Mr

Barlow.

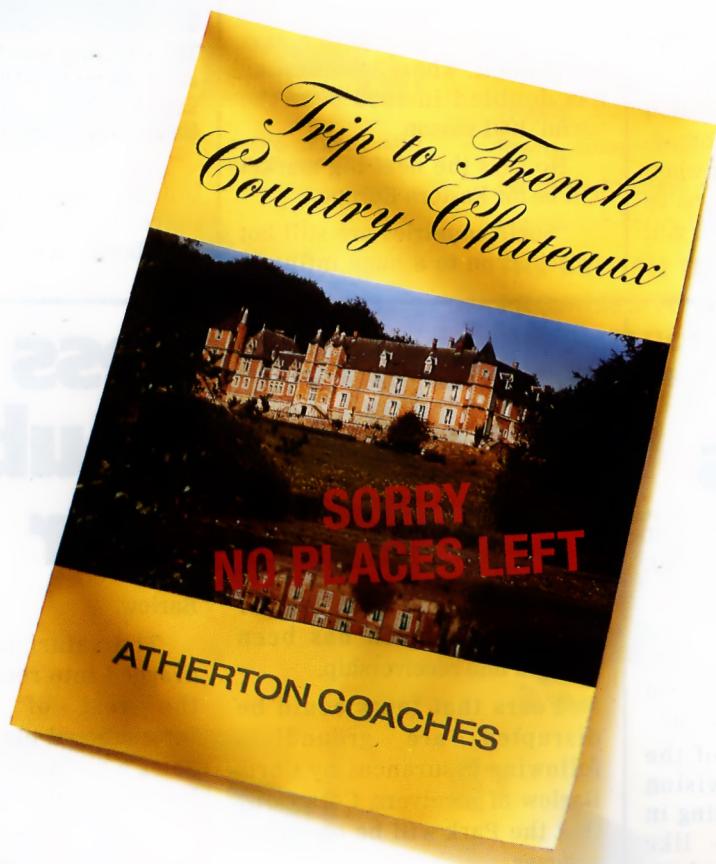
The safari park has been dragged into receivership with the rest of the Themes International plc group, despite being a profitable and successful business, said a spokesman.

planned here. The advertising and marketing exercises starting around Easter are an important part of our business," he said.

**Details of all group rates are available by phoning 0753 830886.**



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## R&E operators' incentive scheme

Windsor's popular Royalty & Empire exhibition has come up with a novel commission payment scheme for coach operators.

Commission is based on the number of people a coach operator brings to the attraction. Royalty & Empire are not releasing figures, but the percentage payable as commission increases in increments over and above 250 visitors. The commission is payable in one lump sum at the end of a year.

Royalty & Empire general manager, Sarah Mansfield, told Coach & Bus Week that she was currently receiving enquiries about the commission scheme from coach operators: "Quite a

few have put themselves down for the scheme."

Introduction of the scheme ties in neatly with the opening of Royalty & Empire's new exhibition celebrating 40 years of the Queen's reign. Ms Mansfield said the new exhibition had got off to a flying start with groups. It had attracted over 2,500 group visitors in the first two weeks of being open.

Admission prices for groups of over 20 to Royalty & Empire, including the new Queen Elizabeth II exhibition, are £3.30 per adult, £2.30 senior citizen and £2.20 child.

**(C) More details from Sarah Mansfield on 0753 857837.**

## All three for one tot

Three major maritime attractions are to launch an enticing incentive for coach drivers at this year's British Travel Trade Fair.

The three maritime attractions are the Mary Rose and HMS Victory in Portsmouth; the Historic Dockyard in Chatham and Historic Maritime Greenwich. They are now marketing themselves collectively as The Great Maritime Collection.

To mark the association, the attractions are offering a bottle of rum free to the driver - providing he has taken at least 10 people to each of the three attractions.

The Great Maritime Collection will be launched with a special nautical music performance on April 1 at stand 270 at the BTTF.

**(C) More information on the incentive scheme is available from Sue Hudson at the Historic Dockyard, Chatham on 0634 812551 or Sallyann Baldry at The Mary Rose Trust on 0705 750521.**

## Tourists put in picture

A giant replica plate camera over 22 feet high will be putting visitors to Garden Festival Wales in the picture about the tourist attractions of the region.

The camera will form the entrance to the Escape to Our Beautiful Landscapes pavilion at Ebbw Vale. After passing through the camera's video show, visitors will see picture postcards come to life. A host of moving animals, birds and robots - including a lifelike David Bellamy - are set in landscapes that will include a beach, seaside pier, forests and waterfall, Harlech Castle, a slate mine, spectacular rocks and a village street.

Visitors will also be able to smell the attractions of Wales through a special 'smellorama' system.

The pavilion has been designed and coordinated by the Development Board for Rural Wales in association with the Wales Tourist Board. Six local authorities are also contributing.

**(C) More details about Garden Festival Wales on 0495 350198.**



Wendy Collins of Drewery Coach Hire was the lucky winner of a brand new video camera in Thorpe Park's free draw held during the recent Excursions show at Wembley. Shown here receiving the prize from Thorpe Park's group sales manager, Derek Oliver, Wendy is both a community nurse and a tour driver with Drewery. She has been driving the Volvo Paramount shown here for the past three years on European and UK tours and private hire.

'I am delighted to have won,' Wendy said. 'The prize will be used to record details of tours and trips, in order to encourage potential clients to use our services in the future.'

Wendy's win made it a double celebration for Drewery, which is celebrating its 21st anniversary this year.

## Rooms in Reading

Reading University has entered into the group accommodation market and is offering operators rooms during peak season for £19.50 inclusive per person per night.

The university has recently completed 149 bedrooms, each with en suite shower room at Bulmershe Court. Surrounded by woodlands, Bulmershe Court is situated at Earley in the heart of the Thames Valley, close to London, Windsor, Oxford and Henley.

Gill Silvester of Reading University told Coach and Bus Week that the situation would be the main attraction to coach operators: 'Windsor Castle and Safari Park, Henley Regatta and the Berkshire downs for

Newbury and the racecourse are all nearby. And our proximity to central London (41 miles) makes Bulmershe Court an excellent out of London stop for groups visiting a show or going to the theatre.'

The rooms have been designed to serve a dual purpose. With a fully equipped kitchen, they will accommodate up to six people self catering as holiday flats. They will also serve overnight parties or coach parties with the inclusion of breakfast and dinner. The supplement for dinner is £7.00 per head.

One hundred single rooms will be available to book from July 18 to September 5.

**(C) Full details from Gill Silvester on 0734 318334.**

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Within the Pageant the Museum of London is staging a unique display of waterfront archaeological finds. Tower Hill Terrace also has a range of shops and a McDonalds restaurant.

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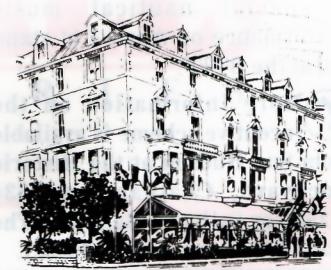
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# When the price is no barrier

Prices will not be a barrier at The Thames Barrier visitor centre since they are being pegged at last year's levels.

Furthermore the site has been improved with a picnic area and a new children's play area this year.

adults £1.80 and £1.10 for concessions, now estimates that the attraction should be itinerised for a one-and-a-half hour stop.

Operators who have not seen the barrier may be surprised at its scale. Each of the tide gates which protect London from freak high tides are five storeys high. The project took eight years to complete and used half a million tonnes of concrete.

Thames Barrier makes an ideal lunch stop for parties

heading into London via the south-east ferryports. It's just off the end of the A102M, signposted off the A206 Woolwich Road. It's within striking distance of the Greenwich Maritime Museum and the Cutty Sark.

The Thames Barrier Function Room can be booked for lunches or the Buffet room can be used.

Alternatively, dinner can be arranged in the Buffet - which offers views of the floodlit barrier. Boat cruises can also be organised. Coach parking is free and there is a discount for drivers' meals.

**Full details of Thames Barrier group meals and admission rates are available from the visitor centre on 081 854 1373. Barrier cruise details are available on 081 854 5555.**

## A touch of the tropics in Stockton-on-Tees

Europe's biggest hothouse for tropical butterflies is soon to be opened at Preston Park - a popular destination for coach operators.

In late May this year visitors to the Stockton-on-Tees venue will be able to visit 'Butterfly World' - a £250,000 development set within the 117 acres of Preston Park. The attraction is a joint development between butterfly expert, Gareth Welsh; Cleveland Action Team and the owner of the park, Stockton Council.

Butterfly World will incorporate Europe's largest enclosed flight area for tropical

butterflies.

A new 120ft by 90ft hothouse will be linked later this year to a reception area reconstructed from Stockton's award-winning pavilion from the Gateshead Garden Festival.

Stockton's mayor, Councillor Michael O'Brien, set the construction work on the steel and glass structure in motion when he cut the first sod of earth in a special ceremony last week.

Stockton's leisure and tourism officer, John Warbrook, said: 'The centre is set to become important not just with visitors, but also as a breeding ground for hundreds of endangered species.'

## Walsall's recession beater

Despite the recession, Walsall Leather Museum got a seven percent increase in visitor numbers last year. But coach operator visits were in the minority.

The West Midlands attraction pulled 27,500 through the door in 1991, including a large number attending its nine-day leather festival and 20 other special activity days. School visits doubled in a year.

But despite visits to the attraction being free, coach operator-organised visits were few and far between.

Of just over 4,000 group

visitors, around 3,700 had organised themselves and only 286 visitors had used the museum after prompting from operators.

Yet the centre is very close to Merry Hill and other popular coach destinations.

"The last year has been a difficult one for most visitor attractions in the region.

"Despite this, the Leather Centre has seen real growth and this has enabled us to plan for 1992 with confidence," said museum curator, Mike Glasson.

**Further details of the Leather Centre and this year's events are now available on 0922 721153.**

## More meals per mile

There'll be more motorway service areas throughout the UK if Government plans are given the green light.

Secretary of State for Transport, Malcolm Rifkind (right), has told the House of Commons that legislation is to be brought in which would allow one service area every 10 miles instead of every 30.



Rifkind: Allowing more service stations

He also revealed that the Government was proposing to sell off the 44 existing sites to their operators and let the private sector choose sites for service areas.

Transport fixes a site and puts a 50-year lease out to tender. The new proposals have been put out to consultation which will end on March 20.

## Sunday opening in theatreland

Never on a Sunday? Well if two pilot schemes prove successful West End theatres may well soon be opening on the Sabbath.

Theatre chiefs are watching with interest the reaction to the

decision by the Cambridge Theatre and the Albery Theatre to abandon the tradition of closing on Sunday and shut up shop the following day instead - Monday being a quiet day.

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**Sally Ferries has reported a two per cent increase in coach traffic between Ramsgate and Dunkerque during 1991. The ferry operator carried a total of 16,230 coaches last year, a modest 350 more than in 1990. However, it is enjoying a good start to 1992. Current coach bookings are up 36 per cent on this time last year.**

**'The market in general has picked up quite considerably in the last month and we are currently booking strongly on all fronts,' said Sally's UK sales manager, Roger Simister.**

## Time gallery to open soon

A new gallery devoted to time will open at Sir Christopher Wren's Old Royal Observatory later this month.

The official opening at the observatory, the home of Greenwich Mean Time and centre of the world's time zones, will be on February 28 - just hours before Leap Year's Day. The gallery will be opened by 'Tim' (Brian Cobby), the infamous voice of the British Telecom speaking clock.

Visitors to the gallery will discover why there are 60 seconds in a minute and 24 hours in a day. The history of timekeeping will be told - from the earliest

hourglasses and astrolabes to the latest Swatch watch - using a large selection of the unique and valuable scientific instruments from the observatory's world-famous collection.

The Old Royal Observatory is currently undergoing restoration and refurbishment work following an award of £245,000 from the Museum and Galleries Improvement Fund. The Octagon Room, one of the most historically significant rooms in the country, will reopen in the spring.

**(C) More details from the National Maritime Museum on 081 858 4422.**

## P&O Prides refitted and refurbished

Dover's two biggest superferries - the sister ships Pride of Dover and Pride of Calais - returned to work last week after annual refits and refurbishments costing £3million.

During refit in Falmouth the two P&O ships were also extensively upgraded as part of a company-wide spend of more than £15million. Improvements made included:

- New open plan information areas where multi-lingual receptionists can provide travellers with wide ranging information and advice.
- New self service gift shops offering a selection of newspapers, sweets, toys and last minute shopping items.
- Redecorated self service restaurants with extra seating.

The third P&O ship on the Dover-Calais route, the Pride of Bruges, now also has a waiter assisted carvery in addition to its self service restaurant. P&O says the carvery is proving to be a great success.

Meanwhile work is progressing in Sicily on the £20million project to lengthen and totally refurbish the fourth P&O vessel for the route, Pride of Kent. The ship is due to return to Dover in May with a capacity for 1,800 passengers and 475 cars - less than Pride of Calais and the Pride of Dover's capacity of 2,290 passengers and 650 cars, but still in the superferry class.

On board facilities on Pride of Kent will include Club Class and a la carte restaurant.

**(C) Details of P&O ferry crossings on 0304 223833.**

## Britain's Top Ten

Five of Britain's major industrial cities are now among the most popular city break destinations, according to figures just released by Goldenrail, the ex-BR shortbreak and holiday operator.

The company's 1991 Top Ten Cities has been compiled from the 150,000 people who travelled with Goldenrail last year. It is:

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>1. London</b>     | <b>6. Liverpool</b>  |
| <b>2. York</b>       | <b>7. Bath</b>       |
| <b>3. Edinburgh</b>  | <b>8. Plymouth</b>   |
| <b>4. Glasgow</b>    | <b>9. Portsmouth</b> |
| <b>5. Manchester</b> | <b>10. Newcastle</b> |

Nick Cust, Goldenrail's joint managing director, said: 'Not only are people interested in Britain's industrial heritage, but also these cities have really worked hard to promote themselves and develop attractions for tourists, from reclaimed docklands to themed museums.'

## NW Workshop

Coach operators and group organisers are being offered free entry to the North West Tourist Board's 1992 Heritage Education Workshop.

More than 70 top regional attractions will be gathered together at Haydock Racecourse for the workshop on Saturday, March 7. Historic houses, gardens, heritage and craft centres, museums and art galleries will all be represented.

Dorothy Naylor, chief executive of the North West Tourist Board, said: 'This is the ideal way for coach operators and anyone who plans group visits to see the breadth of attractions on offer and talk to the managers in person. Everything is under one roof and there is plenty of opportunity to talk to the exhibitors and discuss individual requirements in an enjoyable setting.'

**(C) Contact Nick Brook-Sykes at the North West Tourist Board on 0942 821222.**



## ROADWATCH

This Roadwatch report was compiled by *Coach and Bus Week* with the help of the AA. If there are other points of information you need, write to Roadwatch PSV, *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DS.

## European diesel prices

Prices (in £ Sterling, per gallon. Conversion to litres, x 4.546).	
Austria	1.80
Belgium	1.77
Denmark	1.86
Finland	1.90
France	1.61
Germany	1.70
Greece	0.92

Irish Rep.	2.25
Italy	2.35
Luxembourg	1.26
Netherlands	1.69
Norway	1.31
Portugal	1.83
Spain	1.82
Sweden	2.18
Switzerland	1.85
Yugoslavia	3.04

## Traffic information

### AUSTRIA

Half-term school holidays started last weekend in upper Austria, Styria and Carinthia. Heavy traffic and delays are expected on Autobahn A1, A2, A9 and A10.

### FRANCE

Delays are likely on major roads in Normandy, Brittany, Pays de la Loire, Lorraine, Auvergne, Alpes du Nord, Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi Pyrenees as half-term

school holidays started last weekend.

Expect heavy traffic on major routes in the regions of Vallee due Rhone, Alpes du Nord and around ski resorts until February 23 as visitors travel to and from the Winter Olympic Games at Albertville and Savoie. Expect delays on Autoroutes A40, A43, A430 and routes nationales N6 and N90.

### GERMANY

Some congestion and delays can be

### LONDON/SOUTH EAST

**M4** Berkshire: Daily restrictions at J14 (Hungerford), affects slip roads and roundabouts.

**M20** Kent: Contraflow between J5 and 8 (Maidstone West/Hollingbourne).

**M20** Kent: Various lane closures in both directions between J10 and 11 (Ashford and Hythe).

**M25** Kent: Restrictions both ways J5-6 (Sevenoaks/Godstone).

**M26** Kent: Lane closures between the M25 and J2A (Wrotham) for survey work.

**M11** Essex: Lane closures southbound J9-8 (A11/A120).

**A1** London: Contraflow on Barnet Way between Apex Corner and Stirling Corner.

**A406** London: Contraflow on North Circular Road between Neasden and Staples Corner.

**A3** Surrey: Contraflow at Milford.

**A23** Surrey: Contraflow between Bolney and Warminglid.

**A20** Kent: Restrictions at Charing.

### MIDLANDS/EAST ANGLIA

**M5** Hereford/Worcester:

## Motorway and major 'A' roadworks

For the week February 17-24

Northbound entry and exit slip roads closed at J6 (Worcester/North). Diversions. 50 mph limit J6-8 (Worcester North/Strensham).

**M6** West Midlands: Southbound carriageway at J8 (M5) closes nightly 2000-0600 until 26 February.

**M6** West Midlands: J6-9 (A38/A461) Various lane closures in both directions.

**M11** Cambridgeshire: Restrictions both ways J9-14 (A11/A604).

**A52** Derbyshire: Lane closures at Borrowash cause delays.

**A6** Leicestershire: Various restrictions for bypass work.

**A4040** West Midlands: Outer ring road closed near Portland Road for repairs.

**A604** Suffolk: Restrictions at Haverhill.

### WALES/WEST

**A55** Clwyd: Contraflow either side of Waen Crossroads, near Rhwllt.

For the latest information, call AA Roadwatch on 0836 401, followed by:

**110** for motorways across Britain

**127** for M25

**118** for Northern Ireland

**117** for Scotland

**116** for north-east England

**115** for north-west England

**114** for East Anglia

**113** for Midlands

**112** for Wales

**111** for West Country

The south-east of England is divided up as follows:

**126** for area between M4 and M23

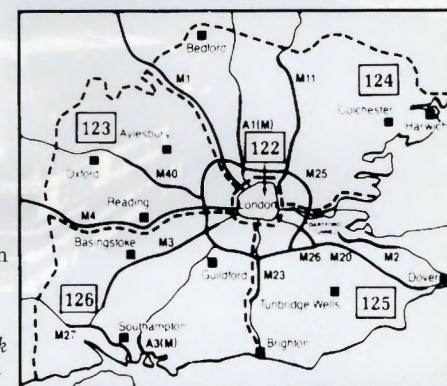
**125** for area between M23 and Dartford Tunnel

**124** for area between Dartford Tunnel and M1

**123** for north-west Home Counties

**122** for Central London  
*(See map, right, UK troublespots, below)*

Calls are charged at 36p per minute off peak and 48p at other times.



expected on the following sections of autobahn as half-term school holidays start this weekend in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Sachsen-Anhalt.

**A3** Frankfurt-Wurzburg-Nurnberg-Berlin-Nurnberg

**A8** Munchen-Salzburg (Austria)

**A9** Nurnberg-Munchen

**A92/B471** North of Munchen

**A99/B2** Munchen-Garmish

**A7/B309** Partenkirchen

**A7/B309** Kempten-Pfronten

on Morpeth bypass.

**A1M** South Yorkshire:

Contraflow between Wadworth and Blythe.

**A19** North Yorkshire: Contraflow at Cleveland Tontine.

**A41** Cheshire: Closed northbound at Boughton Heath, near Chester. Severe delays occur.

**A58** Greater Manchester: Bury Road, Bolton - down to one lane each way.

**A580** Greater Manchester: East Lancs Road, Haydock - reduced to one lane each way.

### SCOTLAND

**M8** Strathclyde: J29 (St James interchange) westbound outside lane closure.

**M74** Strathclyde: One lane closed each way at J9 for repairs to Blackwood Bridge.

**M80** Central Region: Contraflow at J9 (Bannockburn) until February 24.

**A68** Lothian: Various restrictions on South Street, Dalkeith.

**A74** Strathclyde: Lane closures at Elvanfoot.

**A90** Fife: Southbound diversions north of Forth Road Bridge

### NORTH

**M1** South Yorkshire: Lane closures both ways J34-35 (Tinsley/Rotherham).

**M56** Cheshire: Lane closure both ways J9-10 (Lymm/Stretton) in preparation for a contraflow.

**M62** West Yorkshire: Lane closures between J28-29 (Tingley/Lofthouse).

**M61** Greater Manchester: J2 (A580) lane closures on the southbound exit slip for bridge maintenance.

**A1** Northumberland: Contraflow

# COACHES

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May 30th	1 week	Was £140 + VAT, Now £116 + VAT
June 6th	1 week	Was £140 + VAT, Now £116 + VAT
June 20th	1 week	Was £140 + VAT, Now £116 + VAT

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  - \* Excellent chef de cuisine with choice menu. \* Coach parking available/driver free.
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<b>SILVER RING</b>	<b>£3.00</b>	

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The highlight of the racing season at Uttoxeter is the £35,000 added Ansell's National, which is run this year on Saturday, 14th March. £100,000 prize money will be on offer at this meeting.

#### DAILY ADMISSION PRICES

	Ansell's	National
Club .....	£12.00	£15.00
Tattersalls .....	£8.00	£10.00
Silver Ring.....	£5.00	£5.00
Course .....	£3.00	£3.00

#### FIXTURES

February 8th Saturday  
March 14th Saturday  
April 4th Saturday  
April 20th Easter Monday  
April 21st Easter Tuesday  
May 2nd Saturday  
May 7th Thursday EVE  
May 25th Monday SBH  
May 26th Tuesday SBH EVE  
September 17th Thursday  
October 3rd Saturday  
October 15th Thursday  
November 5th Thursday  
December 3rd Thursday  
December 18th Friday  
December 19th Saturday

#### PARKING

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For parties of 20 or more booked  
in advance

	Ansell's	National
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### E.H.A.

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##### 1977 FORD PLAXTON SUPREME

53 seater, MkIV front, long tax and MoT, Telma brake, good condition.

£3,000 + VAT

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LWB 2.5 diesel, 20 seats + 2 standees, excellent condition, long MoTs. Choice of two.

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MB200 Plaxton, 51R, curtains, tinted windows, MoT April '92.

£15,500 + VAT

Will consider P/X for cheaper Bedford

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(27599/BAR)

### DAF



#### 1986 DAF CARIBBEAN II

Double glazed, video, toilet, curtains, carpet, 49 recliners, service history for last two years, MoT May 1992, nice vehicle.

**£38,000 ono + VAT**

Telephone: 0903 209007

(27511/DAF)

### BEDFORD



#### 1979 BEDFORD DUPLE DOMINANT II 500

LUXURY MOBILE MOTOR HOME

Private plate, professionally converted, 12 volts and mains, fridge, microwave, TV, shower and toilet area, sleeps six, awning fitted, totally repainted, 12 months test, must be seen.

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**1986 BEDFORD YNV PLAXTON**, air suspension, 53 recliners, armrest, Webasto heating, MoT Nov 1992, £29,500. Tel. daytime (0273) 605711 or evenings and weekends (0273) 504059.

(27349/BED)

**1976 (R) BEDFORD Dominant 500**, 53 seater, MoT Oct '92, reseated, curtains, new centre aisle, new PA system, new springs, all round excellent condition, £4,750 ono + VAT. Tel. 021 328 1033.

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Registered 1987, MoT June 1992, bought by us 2 years ago. Repainted, new demountable toilet and extra locker fitted by Plaxtons for special work. 32 reclining seats plus 3 loose, curtains, carpets, radio/cassette/PA, hot drinks, boiler & sink unit, power door & airport lights, wheel discs, cream/black/silver. Immaculate - must be seen.

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**BEDFORD Dominant**, Grant doors, 45 seater, S registered, test to August '92, speed limiter, trims, phone fitted. £2,900 + VAT. Tel. 0254 704841 (Lancs).

(27498/BED)

**1978 BEDFORD YMT 500 Turbo**, 53 str, Plaxton, power door, radio cassette, PA, MoT Aug '92, £5,000 + VAT ono. Part ex considered. Tel. (0665) 720907.

(27345/BE)

**BEDFORD YRQ Plaxton Elite**, 45 seater, 1972, superb mechanical and bodily condition, MoT until January 1993. Only £1,850 + VAT. Tel. 0398 23398 or evenings 23598.

(27512/BED)

**1986 BEDFORD YNV PLAXTON**, 3200, 53 E-Type and courier, power door, curtains, radio/PA, speed limiter, new MoT, owned from new, excellent condition.

£28,000 + VAT

**1982 BEDFORD YNT PLAXTON SUPREME IV**, 53 seats, Bristol Dome, radio/PA, power door, speed limiter, retrimmed, P/P MoT June 1992. £12,000 + VAT

**BEDFORD YLO**, 45 seater, S reg, Duple Dominant II, power door, MoT November 1992, 500 engine, excellent condition.

£4,000 + VAT

Tel: 0582 602099

(27476/BE)

**1982 BEDFORD**, 31 seats, Plaxton body, no MoT, MoT can be arranged, open to offers. Tel. 081 591 3156.

(24150/BE)

**1977 BEDFORD YRQ 500**, 45 seater Plaxton, power door, radio/PA, MoT June 1992. £1,500 + VAT ono. Part exchange considered. Tel. 0665 720907.

(27346/BE)

#### RETIREMENT FORCES SALE

of recently purchased 1981 BEDFORD YLO PLAXTON. 45 str, MoT 28.10.92.

£5,350 - no offers

**BAMMANTS COACHES**  
Fakenham, Norfolk  
Tel. (0328) 862505

(27416/BE)

1977 BEDFORD, 45 seater coach, MoT and taxed, radio cassette. £2,700 + VAT. Tel. 0744 56096.

(27403/BE)

#### BEDFORD PJK

Plaxton, 1985 B Reg,

25 seats, tested until Dec 1992, Telma, very low mileage for year, very good condition.

£10,950 + VAT

Choice of four

Capital Coaches  
(Heathrow) 081 897 6131

(27516/BE)

#### BOVA

#### 1988 BOVA FUTURA

Full exec, 49 recliners, courier, toilet, drinks, full side lockers, MoT.

£59,000 + VAT

NO OFFERS

Tel. (0787) 60621

(27341/BO)

### DAF

#### 1986 DAF CARIBBEAN II

Double glazed, video, toilet, curtains, carpet, 49 recliners, service history for last two years, MoT May 1992, nice vehicle.

**£38,000 ono + VAT**

Telephone: 0903 209007

(27511/DAF)

#### 1982 BOVA EUROPA

52 reclining seats, 12 months MoT.

£19,500 + VAT

1986 AUG DAF

Plaxton SB 2300. 57 seats, long test.

£42,000 + VAT

1988 DAF

Plaxton SB 2300. 55 seats, long test.

£48,000 + VAT

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### DOUBLE DECKERS

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71 seats. All usual extras, long MoT, mint condition.

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12 months MoT, meticulously maintained throughout regardless of cost. Must be seen. Available end of February.

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1978 LEYLAND ATLANTEAN DOUBLE DECKER BUS. Superbly refurbished as a promotional vehicle complete with retail outlet and store-room on lower deck and 24 seat video/presentation room on upper deck. Ideal for mobile roadshow/exhibition use or as a static club/souvenir shop. Offers in the region of £20,000

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37 reclining seats, curtains etc. Immaculate. 107 kls only. MoT Jan '93.

A bargain at £23,000 only

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(27550/FO)

#### LEYLAND

LEYLAND NATIONAL, 34 seats, 1978, reconditioned engine, double door, no MoT, open to offers. Tel. 081 591 3156. (27428/LE)

#### 1985 (C) TIGER

245 Plaxton 3500 Low driver position, semi-auto, Eberspacher, rear sunken toilet, continental door, curtains, destination box, plug door, peage window, stereo/P.A. system. Choice of 2 - 1 with 49 Vogel reclining seats, MoT to March 1993.

£26,000

1 with 44 Vogel reclining seats, courier seat, server, water boiler, fridge, MoT to April 1993.

£27,000

Prices exclude VAT & tyres (available at extra cost) Tel: 0929 554588 or 0202 537568 (27558/LE)

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**1981 LEYLAND LEOPARD**  
Plaxton Supreme IV, Paramount front and rear, semi-auto 5 speed box, power door, 49 Recaro recliners, one owner from new, in absolute immaculate condition, curtains, radio, carpets to aisle, tested Dec '92. Any possible inspection.

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Tel. (0977) 612219 day,  
(0977) 615510 eves  
(27502/LEY)

**EX BBC 1986 LEYLAND VANGUARD.**  
25 seater, Wadham Stringer, body certificate fitness, MoT February 1993, v clean, part exchange, AEC Regent bus. Tel. 0959 33142. 1 mile of J4 M25. Kent. (27543/LE)

**1976 LEOPARD DUPLE**, 57 retrrimmed seats, curtains, excellent touring condition, MoT Nov '92. £8,250. 1979 **LEOPARD SUPREME IV**, 53 seats, P.O.D., Webasto, radio cassette, MoT December 1992. £9,250. 1980 **LEOPARD (ZF) SUPREME IV**, 53 seats, P.O.D., radio cassette, choice of two, MoT October 1992. £11,250. Tel. **BARRY COOPER COACHES, WARRINGTON** 0925 267321. (27555/LE)

1979/8. National 2 door, 36 seats, plus 27 standees, MoT, taxed, good condition, ready for work. Buy £4,000, hire £35 daily. Tel. 0860 561515. (27546/LE)

**1978 PLAXTON SUPREME**, 11 metre, 53 retrims, power service door, MoT Jan 1993. Econocruise fitted. £7,500 + VAT. Tel. Kings of Dunblane 0786 824205. (27543/LE)

**MERCEDES**

**1985 MERCEDES 608D**

21str, Ensor conversion, good condition.

**£5,000 + VAT**

**Tel. (0292)**

**312312**

(27549/MER)

**DECEMBER 1988 MERCEDES**, 609D, 24 seater, Whittaker conversion, MoT December 1992, 90,000 miles, owner driven from new, service history available. £18,000 + VAT. Tel. 0246 202512. (27509/MER)

**MERCEDES 609D 1990 (NOV) H**, 26 high back seats, set on tracking, full spec including radio cassette/PA system, wheel discs, 12v step down for phone, tinted windows, carpeted boot, used mainly on tour, feeders, 44,500 miles by careful owner driver, taxed and tested October 1992. £23,000 ono. Tel. 0704 29956. (27412/MER)

**MERCEDES**, 12 seats, 1985, B reg, MoT July 1992, very good condition, moquette to roof, white exterior, tinted windows. £5,000 + VAT. No time wasters please. Tel. 0304 367188 (Kent). (27506/MER)

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**1985 MAN SR 280 HI-LINE**  
49 seats, plus courier, private plate, toilet, coffee machine, video, two TVs, continental door, double glazed, centre carpet, ferry lift, Webasto, used on private hire, tours. MoT Feb '93.  
£35,000 + VAT

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(27531/MAN)

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**1991 OCTOBER TOYOTA OPTIMO**

Excellent condition throughout, full Optimo specification, very low mileage, maker's warranty until October 1992.

**£35,000 + VAT ono**

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**1970 AEC 760 PLAXTON ELITE**

ZF gearbox, power steering, original seats and floor, toilet, servery and tables, wired for TV, video, side lockers, private plate, immaculate condition.

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1988 DAF/Duple 340 53 seat Executive £55,000

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1983 DAF/Plaxton 51 seat £30,000

Vehicles soon coming into stock:

1990 Caetano/Optimo midi bus

1989 Scania/Duple 320 55 seat

2x1989 Volvo B 10M/Plaxton 4 star Executives

1990 Volvo B 10M/Berghoff Executive

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**VOLVO**

**1988 (E) VOLVO BIOM PLAXTON 3500**

49 reclining seats, demountable centre toilet, continental door, courier seat, MoT December 1992, excellent condition.

**£72,500 + VAT**

Part exchange welcome

**Tel. Congleton 0260 273543**

(24147/VO)

**VOLVO B58**, 12 Metre Plaxton, 53 recliners, Mk IV front, Telma, electric fan, recon gearbox, Bristol Dome, private plate, new front tyres, tested January 1993, taxed July 1993, ideal long distance vehicle. £6,500. Tel. (091) 527 0535. (27444/VO)

**VOLVO B58**

**VIEWMASTER 1979**  
MoT Dec '92, 51 recliners plus courier, radio cassette PA, above average condition, extremely reliable vehicle, engine reconditioned 6 months ago, new tyres, new clutch, ready to work. Offers around £16,000 + VAT. No time wasters please Possible part exchange for later Volvo Exec

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(24223/VO)

**1980 VOLVO VIEWMASTER**

MoT 1 year, 51 seater, radio cassette, engine reconditioned, repainted and painted all white.

**£16,000 ono + VAT**

Part exchange possible  
**Tel: 0555 73533**  
(27326/VO)

**1975 B58 PLAXTON EXPRESS**

53 seats, Mark IV front, Bristol Dome, carpet, headrest covers, new MoT, very nice coach.

**£6,950 + VAT**

**Tel: 0822 833636**  
(27361/VO)

**VOLVO B10M**

1982 (P/P) **VIEWMASTER GT BODY**, 49 recliners, curtains, rear sunken toilet, continental door, TV, video, radio/cassette/PA, tables, fridge, Nomad drinks machine, driver's bunk, sold with full MoT. £25,100 + VAT.

**VOLVO B10M**

1983 **VIEWMASTER GT BODY**, 49 recliners, curtains, rear floor mounted toilet, tables, drinks, TV/video, radio/cassette/PA, driver's bunk, all rubber flooring, excellent condition, MoT May 1992. £27,600 + VAT.

Both vehicles have been maintained regardless of cost. For further details telephone:

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**021 555 5522**

(24218/VO)

**1980 VOLVO PLAXTON**

53 seats, MoT August 1992, white outside, re-moquette brown inside, good condition, any trial, available from 21 February. £12,500 ono

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1987 MERCEDES 609, 27 seats.

1986 MERCEDES, 12 seater, high roof, luxury.

1986 MERCEDES, 21 Vogel seats.

1984 MERCEDES, 21 seater.

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1988 709D MERCEDES ALEXANDER, 25 seats, electric door, + standees.

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1987 FORD Transit LWB, new shape, 16 seater, petrol, good condition, COF 1993. £4,750 + VAT. Tel. 091 265 6747. (27563/MB)

1985 MERCEDES 608D, 19 Vogel seats, soft trim, luggage boot, MoT 7/92. Immaculate condition. £9,000 + VAT. Bells Luxury Coaches, 0980 862322. (27259/MB)

1984 FORD TRANSIT Sweet 16, petrol, 4 speed overdrive, taxed and MoT February 1993, swivel door, high back seats, small boot. £2,500 ono. Tel. 0522 528531. (27348/MB)

1982 (X) Ford Transit, 16 high back seats, white, 11 months MoT, 5 months tax, carpets throughout, many new parts fitted. £2,500 + VAT. Tel. 0604 812932. (27561/MB)

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For new Mini and Midi Coach Conversions. Also, 35 seat coachbuilt coach on Mercedes 814L with rear air suspension.

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SEPTEMBER 1990, H REG MERCEDES 408, 15 seat minibus, MoT August 1992 £17,250

SEPTEMBER 1990, H REG MERCEDES 709, 21 seats, 49,750 ks only, MoT August 1992 £22,500

SEPTEMBER 1990, H REG MERCEDES 609, 21 seats, MoT August 1992 £22,250

MAY 1991, H REG MERCEDES 609, 19 seats, D/P coach, MoT May 1992 £27,500

SEPTEMBER 1988, F REG MERCEDES 307, 12 seat minibus, 12 months MoT, new conversion £11,950

DECEMBER 1989, G REG MERCEDES 308, 12 seat minibus, 12 months MoT, new conversion £13,250

JUNE 1989, F REG MERCEDES 709, 21 seat midicoach, 12 months MoT, new conversion £18,500

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NEW LEYLAND/DAF LWB, H/top, diesel, luxury 16 seater minibus... £16,995 + VAT  
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NEW TRANSITS 12/15 seat minibus ..... (price on application)  
91 LEYLAND DAF 400 turbo, h/top, long wheel base, luxury 16 seat minibus..... £13,995 + VAT  
1988 F/ROVER LWB H/top, D, new luxury 16 seater conversion, COIF and one year's test, (54,000 miles)..... £7,995 + VAT

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RENAULT MASTER, 1989, 14 seats, under floor luggage area, radio cassette, tinted windows, wheeltrims, 12 months test, excellent condition. £7,500. Tel. 0482 28473. (27314/MB)

16 SEATER Transit, 1982, tested to end of April, good for year, soft trim, petrol. Priced to sell at £1,200. Tel. Readings 0734 313454. (27535/MB)

1987 25 SEAT OPTARE  
MINIBUS, power door, good condition with new PSV MoT. £7,900

1987 20 SEATS TALBOT  
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1986 SHERPA, 20 seats minibus, Carlisle body, PSV MoT May 1992, good condition. £4,000

1989 MERCEDES 609, 24 highback seats, PSV MoT August 1992. £18,500

1987 MERCEDES 609, 24 high back seats, power door, new PSV MoT. £15,000.

All above vehicles plus VAT

For more details, telephone 0271 863819 (27562/MB)

1988 December Talbot Express Diesel, high top, test November 1992, 15/16 coach sales, (certified to carry one wheelchair plus equipment), low mileage, excellent condition. £6,500 + VAT. Tel. 091 488 1559. (27537/MB)

TRANSIT 190, 1988, diesel, new shape, 16 seater, moquette seats, and tables, parcel racks, radio (no power door), taxed and 12 months test, £10,950 + VAT. Tel. 061 620 8008. (27538/MB)

1989 F REG MAZDA E2200  
Diesel, 5 speed, 14 seater PSV minibus, Made to Measure conversion, 12 months test, new tyres, new batteries. £5,250 + VAT  
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High roof, Crystals conversion, 5 speed, 16 high back moquette seats, 4 speaker radio, cassette, PA, full soft trim, luggage rack, saloon heater, tinted windows, service history, taxed and MoT, vgc.

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1989 (F) MERCEDES-BENZ 814D, luxury coach, one owner, full service history, 195,000 kms, TV and video, forced air ventilation, power door and deep boot, 19 high backed moquette seats and tinted windows, PA system and radio cassette, courier seat.

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This coach is of the highest specification and quality, to view contact - Mark Graham. (24248/MB)

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NEW RENAULT Master Diesel, Hi-roof, 16 str, luxury coach, PSV.  
NEW RENAULT Trafic Diesel, Hi-roof, 14 str, luxury coach.

### USED

1989 G Renault Master Diesel 16 str, air door.  
1987 D Renault Trafic 14 str.  
1985 C Talbot 15 str, PSV.  
1985 C Renault Trafic 14 str, PSV.

FULL RANGE OF RENAULTS IN STOCK  
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2-5 Diesel, 14 luxury seater, one owner from new, new MoT, very good condition.

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**1989 (G) MERCEDES 811D** Alexander Coachbuilt, 33 seats, 4 standees, power door, destination gear, MoT September 1992.

**1986 (D) FREIGHT ROVER Carlyle Conversion**, 16 seats, power door, 5 standees, destination gear, choice of four.

**1986 (D) MERCEDES 608D**, 22 seat bus, 6 standees, power door, MoT August 1992.

**1986 (C) FORD TRANSIT Carlyle Conversion**, 16 seats, power door, 5 standees, destination gear, choice of two MoT March 1992.

**1985 (B) LEYLAND TIGER 245 Alexander Body**, 53 seats, power door, semi auto, MoT July 1992.

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(27276/UN)

**Evenings**  
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**1985 B LEYLAND TIGER 245**, Duple Laser II, 46/49 seats, toilet, servery, power door, semi auto, choice of two. MoTs Sept & Dec 1992.

**1984 A MAN SR280**, 53 reclining seats, rear continental door, Webasto, power door, radio/PA, MoT January 1993.

**1981 (X) FORD 360T PLAXTON SUPREME V**, 53 seats, power door, MoT Jan 1993.

**1977 (R) FORD 360 T. Plaxton Supreme (IV Front)**, 53 seats, choice of two, MoT's May and December 1992.

**1977 (R) LEYLAND LEOPARD Duple Dominant**, 59 seats, semi auto, power door, new MoT.

**1973 (M) LEYLAND LEOPARD Alexander**, 53 seats, manual gearbox, destination gear, new MoT.

**1978 Bedford PJK**, full MoT, vgc ..... £4,500

**1979 Bedford PJK**, full MoT, vgc ..... £4,500

**1982 18 seater Beja**, full MoT, vgc ..... £4,500

**1985 Berkhof 315, 25 seater, luxury coach, vgc, MoT Aug** ..... £15,000

**Tel. 081 965 5333**  
(27526/UN)

### SALE OF COACH/BUS FLEET COACHES

**1985 (PRIVATE PLATE) VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE H**, 49 recliners, central sunken toilet, continental door, coffee making facilities, video and television fitted, Telma, driver's bunk, 2nd owner, new MoT ... £37,500 + VAT

**1989 (G) TOYOTA OPTIMO GL**, 21 seats, curtains, table, centre carpet, radio, cassette & PA ..... £26,500 + VAT

**1979 (T) AEC RELIANCE DUPLE DOMINANT II**, 760 engine, 53 seater, semi-auto box, Express doors, MoT Aug '92 ..... £7,000 + VAT

**1984 (A) FORD TRANSIT**, 16 high back seats, Dormobile conv, petrol with overdrive, MoT Sept '92 ..... £3,800 + VAT

**1983 (Y) IVECO**, 12 seater, petrol, new MoT ..... £2,000 + VAT

### SERVICE BUSES

**1974/75 3 x LEYLAND NATIONALS MKI**, recond 510 engines, 39/48 seats, recent MoTs ..... £4,500 ea + VAT

**1979 2 x AEC RELIANCE**, 53 seater, Marshall body, Express doors, MoT Oct/Nov ..... £3,500 ea + VAT

Local extended tours and contract work may be available to purchasers of above vehicles

Contact Bob Stewart on 031 663 2272

(27468/UN)

### VANGUARD BUS AND COACH SALES

**1988 TALBOT TRI AXLE**, 20 seats, MoT July 1992, vgc ..... £10,500

**1984 Duple Laser Tiger 245**, 50 reclining seats, MoT '92 ..... £20,000

**1984 Duple Caribbean, Tiger 245**, 46 recliners, vgc, MoT Jan '93 ..... £23,500

**1984 Paramount 3500 Tiger 245 Exec**, good condition, new MoT ..... £26,000

**1983 Paramount 3200 Tiger 245**, 53, express, vgc, MoT Feb '93, repainted white ..... £25,000

**1981 Plaxton B58**, 12 mt, 53 seats, vgc, MoT Sept '92, repainted ..... £17,000

**1980 Plaxton Leopard**, 49 seats, MoT Dec '92, repanelled ..... £10,000

**1980 PLAXTON B58**, 53 seats, MoT May '92 ..... £14,000

**1979 PLAXTON B58**, 51 seats, MoT Feb '92 ..... £13,000

**1979 Transit**, fitted 2.5 Di, 16 seats, MoT expired ..... Offers

**1978 Plaxton Leopard**, MoT Jan '93, 53 seats, repanelled ..... £7,500

P/X considered, finance available, existing HP settled (subject to status).

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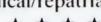
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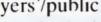
Exclusive facilities also available for Loss of Use cover



Drivers' medical/repatriation expenses



Employers'/public liability



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Passenger/Drivers' effects



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(22959/CIN)

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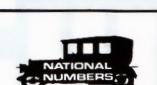
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Bus services and priorities  
I Mitchell, Colin Buchanan and Partners  
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(10743/BO)

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(27264/BFS)

## BUSINESS FOR SALE

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They will continue to be marketed as an integral part of the London Transport network.

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- 47 CATFORD - SHOREDITCH
- 185 LEWISHAM - VICTORIA
- 296 ILFORD - HAROLD WOOD

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If you are interested please talk to Nick Newton on 071-918 3468 for details and application forms. Or write to him at:

Tendered Bus Division, London Transport, Broadway Buildings, 55 Broadway, London SW1H 0BD



London Transport



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**Salary: Subject to experience and qualifications.**

**If you are interested in the above post, please write with a full CV, or alternatively telephone for an application form on**

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(24186)

grey red chevron. Located York – Wold Travel.

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(27450 VSP)

## OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Arising from the promotion of the current post-holder, we are seeking a highly motivated and suitably qualified individual to assume overall control of the Company's operations throughout Lancashire & Gtr Manchester.

With its Head Office at Preston, Ribble Buses operates out of seven depots and three out-stations, comprising some 350 buses and 840 staff.

The successful applicant will work with a small but dynamic management team. He/she will have a well-proven and positive track record of achievement in operational and commercial management within the competitive environment, and will be able to motivate and manage staff effectively and efficiently. An appreciation of quality control and discipline within the workplace are essential qualifications for this appointment.

The right candidate will be rewarded with an excellent salary and conditions package, including a company car and relocation assistance (where applicable).

Letters of application, including a full curriculum vitae, are invited from potential candidates who possess the required qualities and experience, and should be forwarded by no later than March 14th to:-

**J.L. GOULD Esq  
Managing Director  
Ribble Buses, Frenchwood Avenue,  
Preston PR1 4LU**

(24176)

## *Finance Director/ Company Secretary*

Aberdeen

£20K+

Following the promotion of the present post holder, there is a vacancy for a dynamic individual to be appointed as Finance Director, based in Aberdeen.

The Stagecoach Group operates a highly-decentralised management style and we are looking for the successful candidate to take full responsibility for the finance and administration aspects of two of our subsidiary companies, Bluebird Northern Ltd and Stagecoach (Scotland) Ltd which provide passenger transport operations in Grampian, Highland, Tayside, Fife, Central and Strathclyde Regions. Bluebird Northern has 300 vehicles and 450 staff, and Stagecoach Scotland 120 vehicles and 200 staff.

demanding staff, and control financial planning, accounting and administration functions for both companies.

This is an excellent opportunity to join the leading group in the deregulated era of the bus industry as part of the senior management team based in Aberdeen, reporting directly to the Managing Director.

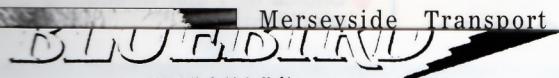
The post qualifies for a company car, BUPA and all the other benefits expected from a large progressive group of companies.

To be considered you will need to be a CA/CIMA qualified or equivalent, with experience in a management role in either the private or public sector.

Please write, enclosing a full C.V. and photograph by 2nd March, 1992 to:

Mr. N. J. Renilson, Group Executive Scotland,  
Stagecoach Holdings PLC,  
Prestonation, Guild Street, Aberdeen AB9 2DR

## Promotion for Everto



Merseyside Transport has publicize

**INCORPORATING: INVERNESS TRACTION, MAGICBUS & PERTH PANTHER**

AGECOACH  
BUSES



*Buses mean business*

The Public Transport Branch of Essex County Council is responsible for securing the operation of socially necessary local bus services and supplementing the commercial service run in the County. It also administers the provision of home to school transport services.

As part of a small pro-active team you will be expected to meet exacting deadlines. You will oversee the processing of four weekly invoices received from contractors and resolve any queries which may arise.

You must be able to demonstrate tact and diplomacy in your dealings with contractors. Experience of work with computers and a high level of numeracy is essential.

You may occasionally be required to work outside normal working hours. A driving licence is essential.

Benefits include flexible working hours, superannuation scheme, subsidised restaurant, sports and social club.

## PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANT

£10,422 - £14,484 p.a.



Essex County Council  
Planning

Further details and an application form are available from the Personnel Officer, Planning Department, County Hall, Chelmsford CM1 1LF. Telephone (0245) 437628. Please quote Post Number P115.

Closing date : 6 March 1992.

**Midland Bluebird****MIDLAND BLUEBIRD  
VACANCY - COACHING MANAGER**

Midland Bluebird, a subsidiary of GRT Holdings PLC, is seeking to recruit a Coaching Manager to be responsible for a small fleet of coaches currently working predominantly on long distance express services. Based at Larbert Depot the opportunity exists for substantial growth not only in the present area of activity but also in the local tourist and private hire market, and in particular, the incoming tourist and corporate business sector. The successful applicant will require to have experience in coaching and the travel trade and demonstrate the necessary enthusiasm and ambition to succeed in expanding this area of the company's activities. The salary and benefits will be by negotiation based on the applicant's experience, qualifications and track record.

**Applications should be addressed to Mr C. Smith, Managing Director, Midland Bluebird, 200 Stirling Road, Larbert, FK5 3NJ no later than Friday 6th March, 1992.**

(24179)

**Coach and Bus  
Week**  
**0733 898111**

**ENGINEERING MANAGER**

Attractive Salary plus Car &amp; Relocation Package

Cleveland Transit, an employee owned bus and coach operator, wishes to appoint an Engineering Manager with responsibility for the maintenance of all Company vehicles and the development of the engineering facility into a commercial business. The new Manager will also have specific Company-wide Health & Safety responsibilities.

This is a demanding position, operating in a competitive environment and good man/management skills are essential as is the ability to manage and control within agreed budgets.

Based on Teesside, the Company is situated in an area close to the sea and readily accessible to the Cleveland Hills, North Yorks Moors, Yorkshire Dales and Northumberland, all areas of outstanding natural beauty.

Apply in writing enclosing a full CV to Mr M Howitt, Managing Director, **Cleveland Transit Ltd, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, TS18 2HW.**

Closing date for applications Friday, 6 March 1992.

Replies in writing in the first instance to **Box No. 27559, Coachmart Classified, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS**

**GENERAL MANAGER**

- Following another highly successful year in a tough market, this established and profitable transport services organisation now has some impressive investment plans both within and beyond the current coach and bus operations. A new Leisure Travel Division will play a major part in the Group's continuing growth and development.
- As General Manager of the new division, you will bring together existing business units and, within the overall strategic framework, carry out a comprehensive review; formulate a broad-ranging business plan; and, with Board agreement, manage its implementation to achieve volume and profit targets.
- Probably aged between 35 and 45, you will be occupying a general management position in the travel industry, preferably in coaches/buses, and involving responsibility for operations, business planning and development. Commercially aware, numerate, and with sound people-management skills, you should combine initiative and determination with flexibility and sensitivity. In an expanding Group, further career opportunities will complement the immediate challenges and rewards.
- Please send your CV to: Stan Dickinson, Theaker Monro & Newman, Suite 2A, Josephs Well, Park Lane, Leeds, LS3 1AB (0532 420129) quoting ref: 1075

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LEEDS · LONDON · MANCHESTER**Leisure Travel****North of England****c. £23,000  
+ car**

**THEAKER  
MONRO  
NEWMAN**

**RECRUITMENT & PERSONNEL  
CONSULTANTS**

# Freeman strengthens Badger's Rapid Transit

James Freeman, managing director of Badgerline's Rapid Transit subsidiary, has taken on two senior managers to strengthen his bid to promote the innovative Belgian Guided Light Transit system in Bristol and Avon.

The two men will join the project management team of the consultancy group already formed by Badgerline Rapid Transit to take GLT through to submission of a Parliamentary bill. They are Bill Wyley, who joins from consulting engineers, Kennedy Henderson, and Tim Smith of Transportation Planning Associates. Mr Wyley has been appointed GLT project manager

and Mr Smith his deputy. They both report to project director, James Freeman.

"They bring a great deal of valuable experience and expertise to our team developing guided Light Transit in Bristol and Avon," said Mr Freeman. "Together with the other members of our consultancy team, they will be responsible for developing the proposal and depositing of a bill in Parliament this coming November."

Mr Wyley, an MA from Cambridge, is a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and a Fellow of the Institute of Highways and Transportation.

He was appointed deputy

managing director of Kennedy Henderson, principal engineering consultants to GLT, just last month. He has a total of 24 years' experience as a civil engineer, more latterly specializing in transport planning.

Mr Smith, a B Sc in civil engineering from Glasgow University and an M Sc in Transport from Imperial College, is a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Chartered Institute of Transport. A chartered civil engineer, he has been with TPA for four years and has more than 20 years experience in civil engineering in the UK and overseas.

## Apprentice of the year



**Apprentice fitter Jamie Smith (left) is congratulated by Plymouth Citybus managing director Brian Fisher**

For the second year running, Jamie Smith, an apprentice fitter at the Milehouse depot of Plymouth Citybus, has been voted the best student on the final year motor vehicle BTEC course at the Plymouth College of Further Education.

He was awarded a trophy and socket set for his efforts. Last year he won a cup and a cash prize. Citybus directors awarded Jamie, 19, a further £50 as a result of his continuing success.

Jamie is one of seven apprentices employed by Plymouth Citybus. Now in his last year of apprenticeship he is enrolled on a management course.

## Promotion for Everton Fan



**Paul Hughes**

Merseyside Transport has promoted former customer services manager, Paul Hughes, to the post of production manager of its recently launched subsidiary MTL Engineering.

Mr Hughes, 38, who lives in Huyton, Liverpool, will oversee refurbishment work carried out at the company's Edge Lane workshops on both Merseybus vehicles and on contracts awarded by other bus and coach operators, including the well-

publicized London Buses Routemaster refurbishment contract.

Mr Hughes joined the PTE operator in 1972 as a wages clerk before moving into engineering, where he was later to gain experience as an industrial engineer, senior production engineer and commercial engineering officer.

He is married and is an Everton supporter.

## New prof for PCL

Peter Jones is to take up the appointment of professor and director of the Transport Studies Group within the School of Urban Development and Planning at the Polytechnic of Central London.

He is currently deputy director of the Transport Studies Unit at Oxford University, but has been involved with the PCL Transport Studies Group on a part time basis since December 1991. Mr Jones' new post became vacant after Professor Rigas Doganis left to take up an appointment at the Cranfield Institute of Technology.

The PCL Transport Studies Group was set up in 1971 and

offers Masters courses in Transport Management and Planning, both for students from Western Europe and from developing countries. It has an active teaching and research team specializing in public transport, logistics and distribution, air transport and tourism.

PCL says the appointment of Mr Jones will broaden the research base of the group to encompass general urban transport policy issues, methodological and behavioural studies into household travel patterns, and public attitude research.

## Stagecoach's new MD at Ribble Buses

Following the appointment of Barry Hinckley as chairman of Stagecoach subsidiary Ribble Buses, John Gould has taken over as managing director of the Preston-based company.

Mr Gould, 41, was formerly operations director and has been with the company since 1990.

He joined the industry as a bus conductor in West Yorkshire in 1975 and, after serving as a driver, entered management as

an inspector in 1983 before moving on to a series of managerial positions in Bradford, the West Midlands and Greater Manchester. He is married with two children and lives in East Lancashire.

Ribble Buses currently employs over 850 staff and operates 350 buses out of seven depots throughout Lancashire and Greater Manchester.

# Hughes DAF



VAN HOOL

VAN HOOL

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BUS MANUFACTURER

## Hughes DAF – VAN HOOL



Available from stock or to your specification

- DHS, SB3000 rear engine with Alizee 'H', 'DH' and Super High coachwork.
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- Comprehensive specification includes, 51 reclining seats, demountable toilet, double glazing etc.

## NEW DAF COACHES WITH 3 YEARS DRIVELINE WARRANTY

AVAILABLE FROM STOCK OR TO YOUR SPECIFICATION

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- DHTD, DHS, SB3000 rear engine with 3200 low driver and 3500 coachwork.
- MB 230 with 3500 coachwork.
- DKZ SBR double deck coachwork.
- Choice of 1 star through to 5 star specification

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# COACH AND BUS

The PSV Industry's News Weekly

## WEEK

In this first issue of Coach and Bus Week, you'll find all the best of Bus Business and Coachmart. You'll also find a whole lot more, all created to give you better information, and more up-to-date news to help you run your business.

Coach and Bus Week takes over from Bus Business and Coachmart from this week.

Now, every seven days, at no extra cost, you'll receive this bigger, better new magazine for the entire PSV industry.

Coach and Bus Week reflects the changes in this business, but also respects the traditions.

Coach and Bus Week will tell you what's happening, and also give the background to the news.

Coach and Bus Week will show you what industry leaders are thinking – and doing, but won't overlook the smaller operator.

Turn to the back of Coach and Bus Week, and you'll find even more classified ads – now Coach and Bus Week gives you an unrivalled opportunity to buy and sell.

Because it's a weekly, you can get your ads in fast, and pick up a good deal even quicker. Coach and Bus Week is Britain's

newest PSV industry newsweekly, but with years of Bus Business and Coachmart experience and excellence behind it.

It's now the essential magazine for everyone connected with buses and coaches.

Don't miss it!

### From The Editor-in-Chief

Dear PSV Professional,

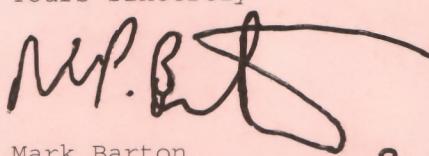
Coach and Bus Week represents months of intensive research and planning here at EMAP Response. We know your industry, and we know it's fast-changing. You need the facts first, every week if possible.

And you need the coverage of legal matters, comprehensive details of business opportunities, information about other operators, and much more.

So, in Coach and Bus Week, you'll discover that mix – of latest news and in-depth articles; of firm favourites from Bus Business and Coachmart; and some new arrivals – written by the best PSV journalists around and all designed to give you the business information – and the competitive edge that's vital in this business nowadays.

Coach and Bus Week is the magazine for your business: let us know what you think.

Yours sincerely



Mark Barton